

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • FEBRUARY 2001

LIAHONA



LIAHONA



ON THE COVER

Front: *Brother Joseph*, by David Lindsley.
Back: *Joseph and Oliver in Solemn Prayer*, by Del Parson.



THE FRIEND COVER

See "Luz Karina Sánchez of Yaguarón, Paraguay," page 4. (Photograph by Richard and Mary Ann Whetten Lyman.)

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BROTHER MANOÏ'S PASSING

We enjoyed very much the article in the August 1999 issue by R. Val Johnson and the pictures of Church members in New Caledonia. We served the first year of our mission in New Caledonia before being transferred to Fiji. We were saddened recently by news that Brother Teahumanu Manoï, one of the leaders featured in the article, passed away. We send our condolences to Brother Manoï's family and friends and to the missionaries who have served in New Caledonia.

*Elder Jerald and Sister Janet Hansen
Finlinson,
Fiji Suva Mission*

SHARING TIME ARTICLES HELP LITTLE

INVESTIGATORS

I'd like to express my deepest gratitude for the articles that are printed every month in the *Liahona* (Spanish), especially the Sharing Time articles. They have helped me enormously with our little investigators. These children show the greatest interest when we share the various topics, pictures, and games with them.

I have been a Primary president for four years, and it has been wonderful to know I can count on this special and important magazine. It helps us in our callings, in our classes, and in everything that is important in the Church.

*Selene Villalobos de Quiñones,
Fajardo Branch,
Fajardo Puerto Rico District*

"THE GOOD LIST"

I am very grateful for the article "The Good List" in the March 1999 *Liahona* (Portuguese). I really learned to value my talents, which I have hidden for many years because of fear or embarrassment.

I never thought to find anything so interesting and remarkable in the Church magazine. Thank you. This message is what I was really missing.

The magazine is a marvelous blessing to me and to other youth. I am sure its gospel messages are a foundation for my future mission.

*Anderson Bispo dos Santos,
São Caetano Ward,
Salvador Brazil North Stake*

LEARN THROUGH OTHERS' EXPERIENCES

I am 17, and I've been a member of the Church for six years. I just love to read the *Liahona* (Spanish) because it's one way to learn through the experiences of other people. Whenever I read the magazine, I realize it really is a compass that shows us the path to follow.

*Ronald Luis Hinostroza Fortuna,
Bolívar Ward,
Lima Perú San Luis Stake*



Preparing the Way

By President Thomas S. Monson
First Counselor in the First Presidency

I love the work of the Primary, wherein teachers instruct little children to walk in the light of the gospel of Christ. They teach each child to sing with personal conviction:

*I am a child of God, . . .
Lead me, guide me, walk beside me,
Help me find the way.
Teach me all that I must do
To live with him someday.¹*

Part of the great love of Primary teachers is preparing boys to receive the Aaronic Priesthood.

Under their direction, Primary children are asked to commit to memory the Articles of Faith of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. You remember them. May I mention just two:

“We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.”²

“We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of



John the Baptist preached faith, repentance, baptism by immersion, and the bestowal of the Holy Ghost. Part of the great love of Primary teachers is preparing boys to receive the Aaronic Priesthood—the same priesthood held by John the Baptist.

Paul—We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.”³

Can you think of a more firm foundation, a more basic philosophy to guide any of us than the Articles of Faith? What a gift teachers impart when they expect each child to know and indeed live by such a standard. They personally accept the divine injunction, “Feed my sheep; feed my lambs.”⁴

Some may inquire: What is the significance of the Aaronic Priesthood for which such preparation takes place? Is it all that important in the life of a boy? The Priesthood of Aaron “is an appendage to the . . . Melchizedek Priesthood, and has power in administering outward ordinances.”⁵ John the Baptist was a descendant of Aaron and held the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood. Perhaps we could review the life and mission of John so that the importance of the Aaronic Priesthood might be more fully appreciated.

Long years ago and distant miles away, in the conquered country of Palestine, a marvelous miracle occurred. The setting was bleak, the time one of tumult. In these, the days of Herod, king of Judea, there lived a priest named Zacharias and his wife, Elisabeth. “They were . . . righteous before God.”⁶ However, long years of yearning had returned no reward—Zacharias and Elisabeth remained childless.

Then came that day of days ever to be remembered. There appeared to Zacharias the angel Gabriel, who proclaimed: “Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. . . .

“ . . . He shall be great in the sight of the Lord.”⁷

Elisabeth did conceive. In due time a son was born, and according to the angel’s instruction he was named John.

As with the Master, Jesus Christ, so with the servant, John—precious little is recorded of their years of youth. A single sentence contains all that we know of John’s history for a space of 30 years—the entire period which elapsed between his birth and his walk into the wilderness to commence his public ministry: “The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.”⁸

His dress was that of the old prophets—a garment woven of camel’s hair. His food was such as the desert afforded—locusts and wild honey. His message was brief. He preached faith, repentance, baptism by immersion, and the bestowal of the Holy Ghost by an authority greater than possessed by himself.

“I am not the Christ,” he told his band of faithful disciples, “but . . . I am sent before him.” “I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh.”¹⁰ “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.”¹¹

Then there transpired the climactic scene of John’s mission—the baptism of Christ. Jesus came down from Galilee expressly “to be baptized” by John. Humbled of heart and contrite in spirit, John pleaded, “I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?” The Master’s reply: “It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.”¹²

“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

“And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”¹³

John’s testimony that Jesus was the Redeemer of the world was declared boldly. Without fear, and with courage, John taught, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”¹⁴

Of John, the Savior later testified, “Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist.”¹⁵



What a gift teachers impart when they expect each child to know and indeed live by the standards found in the Articles of Faith. They personally accept the divine injunction, “Feed my sheep; feed my lambs.”

John’s public ministry moved toward its close. He had, at the beginning of it, condemned the hypocrisy and worldliness of the Pharisees and Sadducees; and he now had occasion to denounce the lust of a king. The result is well known. A king’s weakness and a woman’s fury combined to bring about the death of John.

The tomb in which his body was placed could not contain that body. Nor could the act of murder still that voice. To the world we declare that at Harmony, Pennsylvania, on 15 May 1829, an angel “who announced himself as John, the same that is called John the Baptist in the New Testament” came as a resurrected

personage to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. “The angel explained that he was acting under the direction of Peter, James, and John, the ancient apostles, who held the keys of the higher priesthood, which was called the Priesthood of Melchizedek.”¹⁶ The Aaronic Priesthood was restored to the earth.

Thanks to that memorable event, I was given the privilege to bear the Aaronic Priesthood, as have millions of young men in these latter days. Its true significance was taught me by my former stake president, the late Paul C. Child.

When I was approaching my 18th birthday and preparing to enter military service in World War II, I was recommended to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood. Mine was the task of telephoning President Child for an appointment and interview. He was one who loved and



Jesus came down from Galilee expressly “to be baptized” by John. Humbled of heart and contrite in spirit, John pleaded, “I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?” The Master’s reply: “It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.”

understood the holy scriptures. It was his intent that all others should similarly love and understand them. Knowing from others of his rather detailed and searching interviews, our telephone conversation went something like this:

“Hello, President Child. This is Brother Monson. I have been asked by the bishop to seek an interview with you.”

“Fine, Brother Monson. When can you visit me?”

Knowing that his sacrament meeting time was six o’clock, and desiring minimum exposure of my scriptural knowledge to his review, I suggested, “How would five o’clock be?”

His response: “Oh, Brother Monson, that would not provide us sufficient time to peruse the scriptures. Could you please come at two o’clock and bring with you your personally marked and referenced set of scriptures.”

Sunday finally arrived, and I visited President Child’s



home on Indiana Avenue. I was greeted warmly, and then the interview began. He said: “Brother Monson, you hold the Aaronic Priesthood. Have you ever had angels minister to you?”

My reply was, “No, President Child.”

“Do you know,” said he, “that you are entitled to such?” Again came my response: “No.”

Then he instructed, “Brother Monson, repeat from memory the 13th section of the Doctrine and Covenants.”

I began, “Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels . . .”¹⁷

“Stop,” President Child directed. Then in a calm, kindly tone he counseled: “Brother Monson, never forget that as a holder of the Aaronic Priesthood you are entitled to the ministering of angels.” It was almost as though an angel were in the room that day. I have never forgotten the interview. I yet feel the spirit of that solemn occasion. I revere the priesthood of Almighty God. I have witnessed its power. I have seen its strength. I have marveled at the miracles it has wrought.

Almost 50 years ago I knew a boy, even a priest, who held the authority of the Aaronic Priesthood. As the bishop, I was his quorum president. This boy, Robert, stuttered and stammered, void of control. Self-conscious, shy, fearful of himself and all others, he had an impediment of speech which was devastating to him. Never did he fulfill an assignment; never would he look another in the eye; always would he gaze downward. Then one day, through a set of unusual circumstances, he accepted an assignment to perform the priestly responsibility to baptize another.

I sat next to him in the baptistry of the sacred Tabernacle. He was dressed in immaculate white, prepared for the ordinance he was to perform. I asked Robert how he felt. He gazed at the floor and stuttered almost incoherently that he felt terrible.

We both prayed fervently that he would be made equal to his task. Then the clerk read the words: “Nancy Ann McArthur will now be baptized by Robert Williams, a priest.” Robert left my side, stepped into the font, took little Nancy by the hand, and helped her into the water which cleanses human lives and provides a spiritual rebirth. He then gazed as though toward heaven and, with his right arm to the square, repeated the words “Nancy Ann McArthur, having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”¹⁸ Not once did he stammer. Not once did he stutter. Not once did he falter. A modern miracle had been witnessed.

In the dressing room, as I congratulated Robert, I expected to hear this same uninterrupted flow of speech. I was wrong. He gazed downward and stammered his reply of gratitude.

I testify that when Robert acted in the authority of the Aaronic Priesthood, he spoke with power, with conviction, and with heavenly help.

Such is the legacy of one called John, even John the Baptist. We hear his voice today. It teaches humility; it prompts courage; it inspires faith.

May we be motivated by his message. May we be inspired by his mission. May we be lifted by his life to a full appreciation of the Aaronic Priesthood and its divine power. □

NOTES

1. “I Am a Child of God,” *Children’s Songbook*, 2–3.
2. Articles of Faith 1:1.
3. Articles of Faith 1:13.
4. See John 21:15–16.
5. D&C 107:14.
6. Luke 1:6.
7. Luke 1:13, 15.
8. Luke 1:80.
9. John 3:28.
10. Luke 3:16.
11. Matthew 3:11.
12. See Matthew 3:13–15.
13. Matthew 3:16–17.
14. John 1:29.
15. Matthew 11:11.
16. D&C 13, section heading.
17. D&C 13:1.
18. See D&C 20:73.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

1. Primary teachers assist parents in teaching children the gospel of Jesus Christ.
2. Among gospel teachings are the importance of the Aaronic Priesthood and the ministry of John the Baptist.
3. The ministry of John the Baptist teaches us of humility, courage, and faith.

UNCOVERING GOSPEL ROOTS IN BRITAIN

PROPHETS WALKED THIS LAND.
NOW THESE TEENS ARE TRACING THEIR FOOTSTEPS.

By Janet Thomas

One bright Saturday morning, youth from the Cardiff Wales Stake, with lunches stuffed in backpacks and plenty of enthusiasm for the outing, set off for a special activity to commemorate the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood and to uncover the roots of the gospel in the British Isles.

Those roots run deep—back 160 years—to the time when Wilford Woodruff (1807–98) and Brigham Young (1801–77) walked the roads their bus is now traveling. Both Elder Young and Elder Woodruff, who were members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles at that time, became Presidents of the Church.

Since many teenagers are in one vehicle, the noise level is high as the bus crosses the border from Wales into England. Everyone is talking and having a great time. The youth love being together any chance they get. They love being around friends who share their beliefs.

Charlotte Forward, age 15, of the Cwmbran Ward enjoys being with her friends Kathryn Elliott of the



Blackwood Ward and Rachel Griffiths of the Newport-Gwent Ward. They usually get to see each other only at stake activities, and spending all day together is a huge treat. Charlotte says, “Wales is a beautiful place to

live. Everyone is so great to be with. We all get along in the stake. I’m something like the seventh generation in the Church. Some of my ancestors emigrated to Utah, but some stayed. Now I seem to have relatives everywhere here.”

The bus pulls into the village of Ledbury. It’s a fairly ordinary country town these days except for the charming old covered outdoor market on the main street. Andrew Dearden, the stake Young Men president, tells the youth that the first missionaries in this area preached in the market square. A few of the young men, who will be serving missions themselves in a few years, get out of the bus and walk under the old roof of the market. Would they have the nerve to stand in that spot and talk about the gospel to the townspeople?



The first missionaries in Great Britain preached in the village of Ledbury (above, center inset). On the Malvern Hills (background and far left), Wilford Woodruff dedicated the area for the teaching of the gospel.



How would they react if the crowd did not listen?

Some of the people 160 years ago who heard Wilford Woodruff give a single sermon asked to be baptized. The youth are astounded that the missionaries had such success spreading the gospel. Clive Wilkinson, age 18, who is looking forward to his mission, is awed to think that back then hundreds of people in this area listened to the missionaries and believed.

“It’s amazing that people would be converted by listening to just one talk,” says Clive. “I’m a stake missionary, and when we go out with the missionaries now, it’s nothing like that. We’re lucky to get in the door. It’s amazing that the missionaries back then

could come over here with this new religion that no one had heard about and people would have enough faith to believe them and be converted straightaway like that.”

The next two stops are different from each other, but both are mentioned often in Church history. The first stop is the Malvern Hills. This spot is where Wilford Woodruff dedicated the area for the teaching of the gospel. After eating lunch, the youth hike up a trail, leaving the roads and houses behind, to the grassy slopes at the summit. From there they look one direction and can see the county of Herefordshire, England, spread out at their feet. Then they turn toward their homes and can see into Wales.

The second stop is the John Benbow farm. Although

Malvern Hills

The Malvern Hills are a high ridge in southwestern England, grassy on top and offering a spectacular view of about 50 kilometers in all directions. The highest spot is the Herefordshire Beacon.

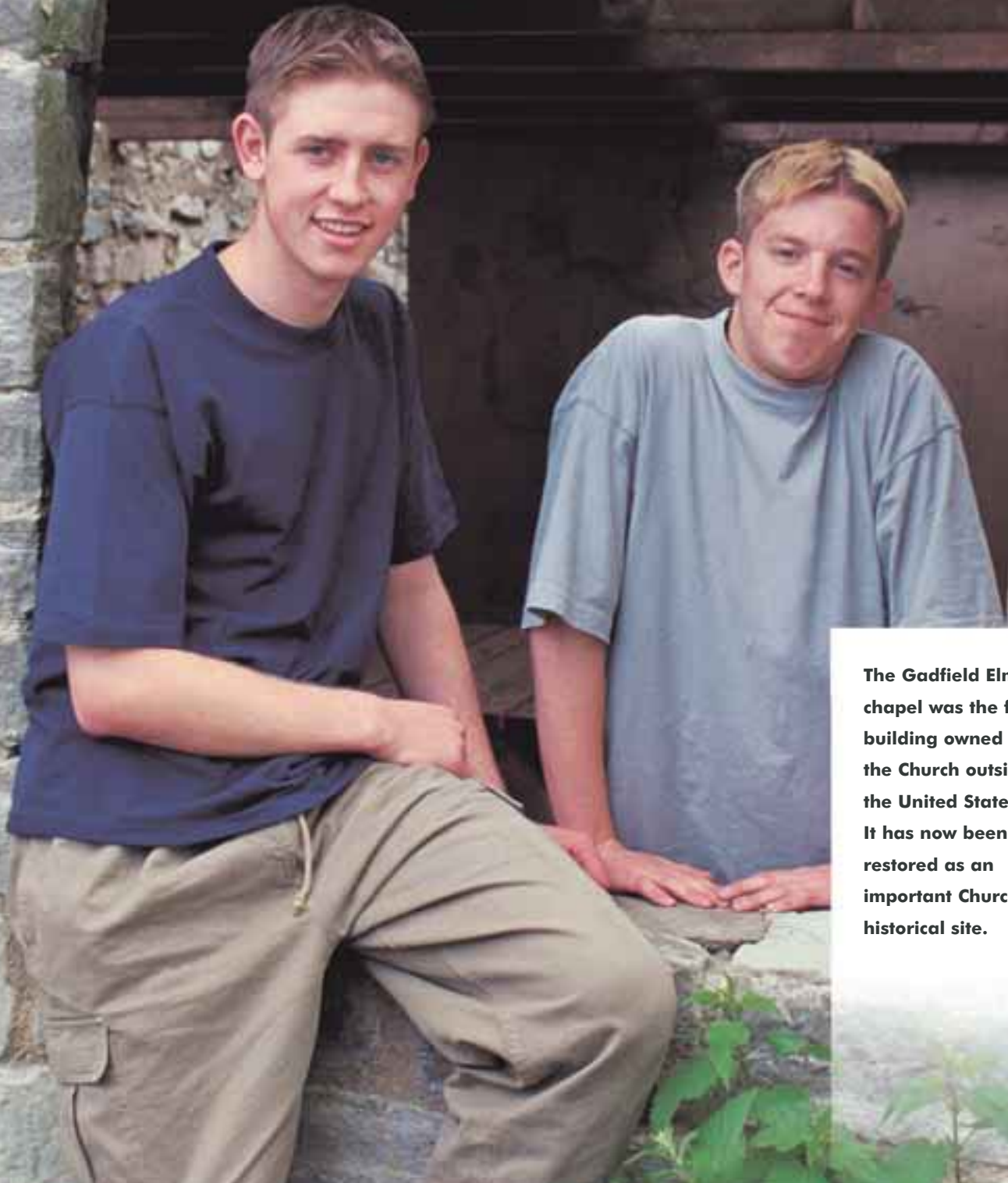


Wilford Woodruff wrote in March 1840 about climbing the Malvern Hills: “In my walk to Colwell on the 9th, I had a great survey of nature and of the power of the Creator; this was while standing upon the summit of Malvern Hill, elevated from twelve hundred to fifteen hundred feet [360 to 460 meters] above the level. The surrounding country was before my

view, stretched out many miles. . . . While upon this noted hill, beholding the grand and charming prospect before me, the thunder began to roll, and the lightning flashed in the vale below, on which the rain descended in torrents. The solemnity and grandeur of the scene was impressive as I stood upon the hill above the clouds, surveying the beautiful works of the

Creator, and His majesty in the storm” (quoted in *Wilford Woodruff*, 148–49).

On Beacon Hill Elder Brigham Young, Elder Wilford Woodruff, and Elder Willard Richards (1804–54), all of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, prayerfully decided to authorize printing of the Book of Mormon and a hymnbook in Great Britain. These Brethren did not have access to a temple, so they often retreated to the Malvern Hills to discuss with the Lord various weighty decisions. These hills, and particularly Beacon Hill, are sacred places in Church history.



The Gadfield Elm chapel was the first building owned by the Church outside the United States. It has now been restored as an important Church historical site.



GADFIELD ELM CHAPEL, BY AL ROUNDS

Gadfield Elm Chapel

The Gadfield Elm chapel was built in 1836 by a Christian congregation called the United Brethren. Donated to the Church by the United Brethren, who joined the Church during the spring and summer of 1840, the chapel was used extensively until most of the newly baptized Saints emigrated to Nauvoo. The chapel was sold at that time to raise funds for their emigration.

Although the Gadfield Elm chapel fell into disrepair, local members purchased it in 1995 and restored it to look as it did 160 years ago, based on original drawings and descriptions. In April 2000 Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, a descendant of one of the original United Brethren leaders, rededicated the chapel. It will be used for occasional Church gatherings; those interested in Church history may also visit the site.

the farm itself is privately owned now, the small pond where hundreds of converts were baptized has been purchased and is maintained by the Church. The youth relax on the freshly cut grass and try to imagine the impressive scene when Wilford Woodruff was a missionary here.

In his journal, Elder Woodruff wrote that he felt the Lord guided him to this spot. He traveled many kilometers by coach, then walked many more kilometers. He met John Benbow, a wealthy farmer, who with his wife, Jane, belonged to a large group that had broken away from the traditional religious denominations of that time. Wilford Woodruff recorded:

“[John Benbow] sent word through the neighborhood that an American missionary would preach at his house that evening. As the time drew nigh, many of the neighbors came in, and I preached my first gospel sermon in the house. I also preached at the same place on the following evening, and baptized six persons, including Mr. John Benbow, his wife, and four preachers of the United Brethren. . . .

“ . . . The parish church that stood in the neighborhood of Brother Benbow’s, presided over by the rector of the parish, was attended during the day by only fifteen

Wilford Woodruff was guided to an area where an entire religious congregation had been prepared to receive the gospel. He baptized about 600 people in the pond on John Benbow’s farm (above, middle).



persons, while I had a large congregation, estimated to number a thousand, attend my meetings through the day and evening” (quoted in Matthias F. Cowley, *Wilford Woodruff: History of His Life and Labors* [1964], 117–18).

Many of those thousand listeners were baptized, and the converts formed some of the earliest branches of the Church in England. John and Jane Benbow and Thomas Kington also financed the first British edition of the Book of Mormon and a Latter-day Saint hymnbook.

During those few months in 1840, Wilford Woodruff preached to and baptized all the members of that break-away group except for one man—a total of about 600 people. Elder Woodruff also baptized more than 1,200 from other denominations. Many of those baptized sold their land and possessions and left England to gather in Nauvoo, where they became stalwarts of the Church. They later were driven out of Nauvoo, crossed the plains, and established new communities in the western United States. Today their influence is felt throughout the earth, and many of their descendants continue doing the Lord’s work.

Although there isn’t a lot to see except the pond at the Benbow farm, the youth are quiet. The peaceful spirit of the place seems to penetrate every heart. “It feels really special,” says Suzy Taylor of the Blackwood Ward, “to think about those people who have been here before us. It is nice to see where our leaders were talking about.”

The final stop is at the remains of the Gadfield Elm chapel. At the time of their visit, just the rock walls are standing. The roof is gone, and nettles have grown up inside. The chapel was the first building owned by the Church outside the United States. It is easy to imagine what it must have been like 160 years ago, as people

walked down the winding country road to the chapel. It is a little more difficult to imagine the power and spirit that must have been there

when Wilford Woodruff preached. In one evening people learned the truth, and it changed the course of their lives.

The seeds that were planted then still bloom in the youth who come back to visit the places where such miracles took place. “It’s quite amazing, really,” says Joseph Parry of the Caerphilly Branch. “These places are around us. I’ve always thought of Church history as being in America. It was actually in Britain, too.” □

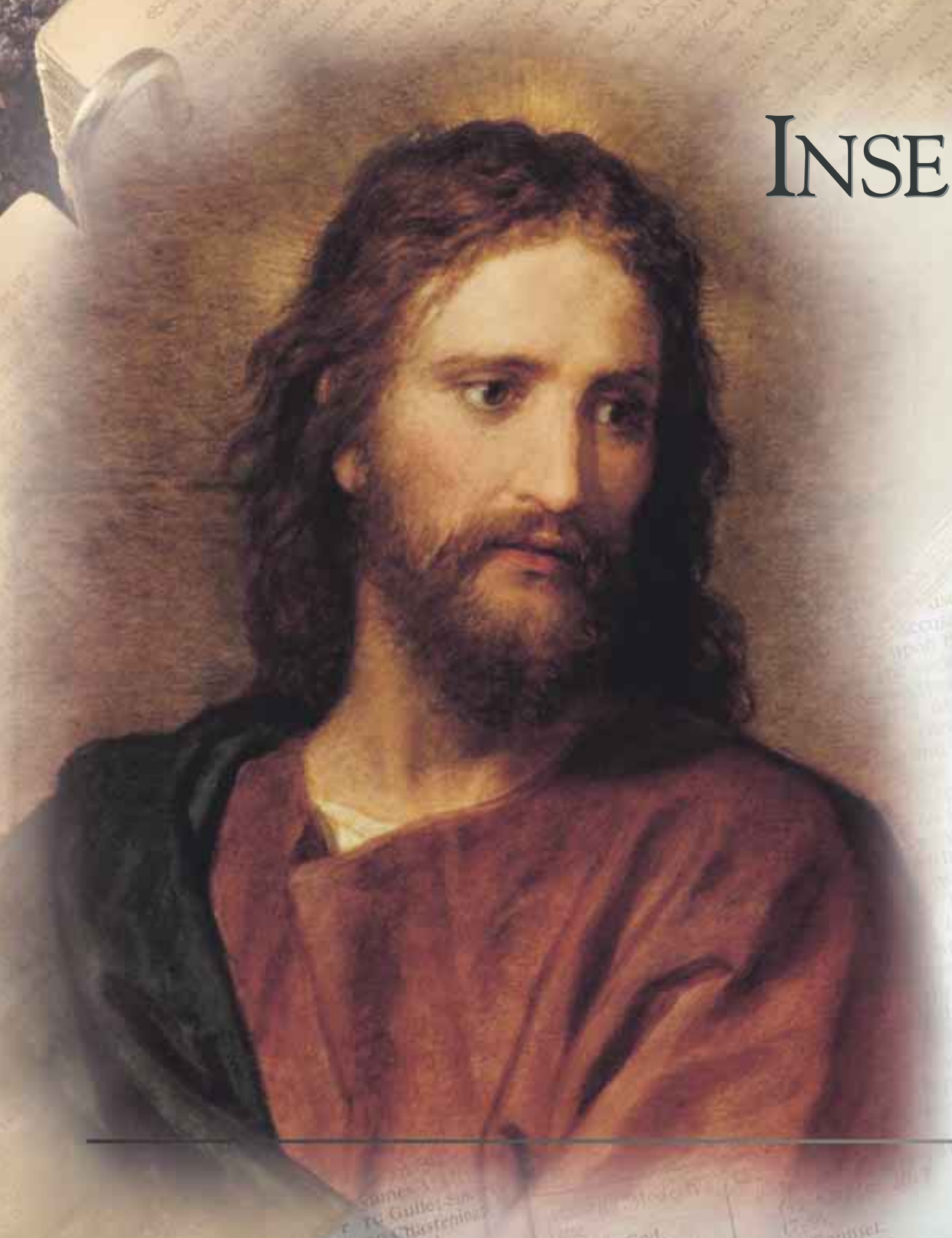


BENBOW FARM, BY FRANK MAGLEY

Pond at John Benbow Farm

This small pool of water on the John Benbow farm was the scene of hundreds of baptisms in 1840. On 5 March, Wilford Woodruff baptized John and Jane Benbow and four preachers from the local congregation of a group called the United Brethren. Elder Woodruff spent most of the following day, as he wrote, “clearing out a pool of water and preparing it for baptizing, as I saw that many would receive that ordinance. I afterwards baptized six hundred persons in that pool of water” (quoted in *Wilford Woodruff*, 117).

INSE



PARABLE WITNESSES OF JESUS CHRIST

By Elder John M. Madsen Of the Seventy

The Doctrine and Covenants testifies of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon, and both witness of the Savior.

The Doctrine and Covenants and the Book of Mormon are inseparable, powerful witnesses of the divinity of Jesus Christ and His great latter-day work. These two volumes of scripture fulfill, at least in part, a promise of the Lord to Enoch: “And righteousness

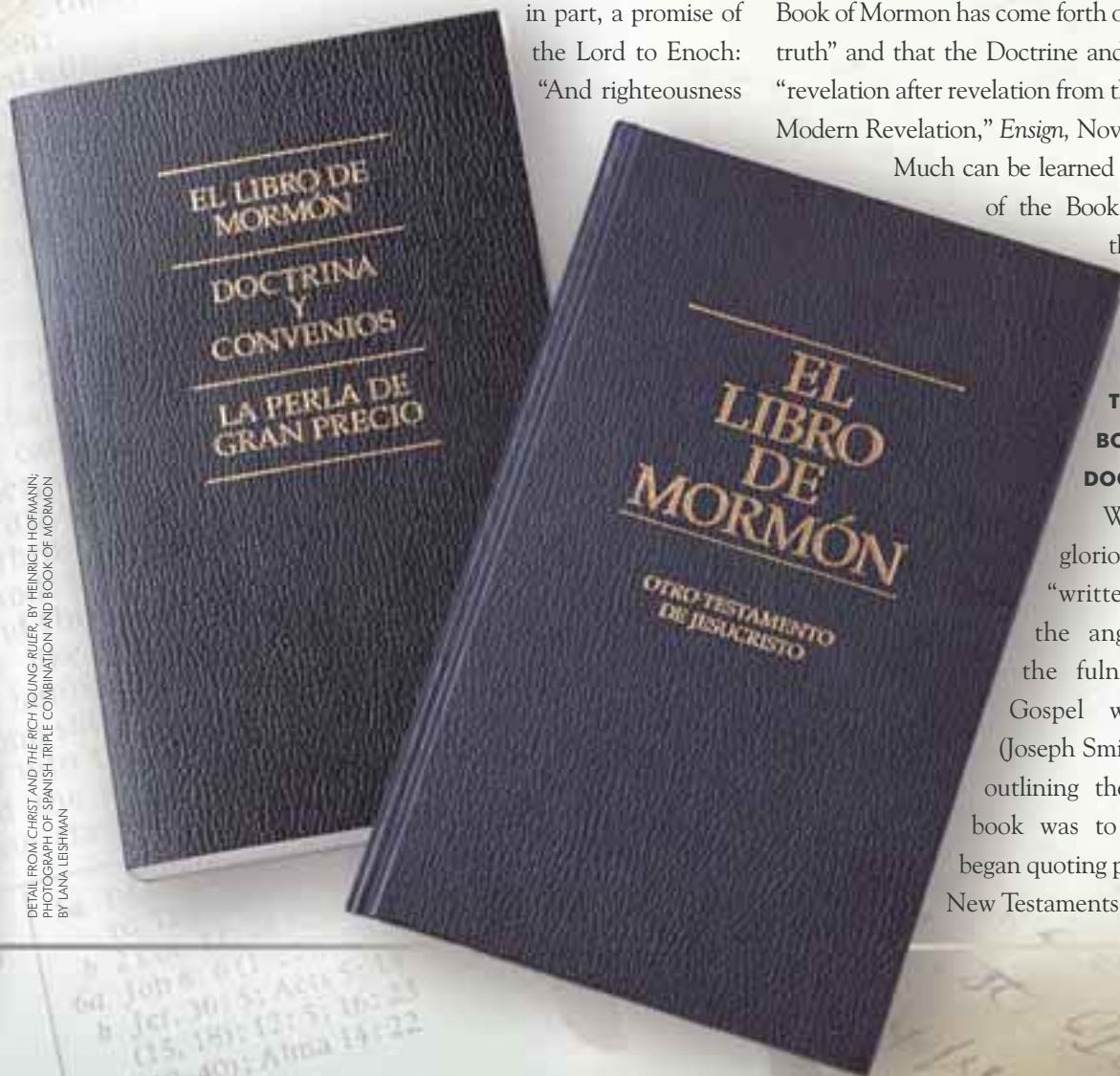
will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth” (Moses 7:62).

After quoting this scripture in a conference talk, President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) said that “the Book of Mormon has come forth out of the earth, filled with truth” and that the Doctrine and Covenants is filled with “revelation after revelation from the heavens” (“The Gift of Modern Revelation,” *Ensign*, November 1986, 79–80).

Much can be learned regarding the importance of the Book of Mormon by reading the revelations contained in the Doctrine and Covenants.

TIES BETWEEN THE BOOK OF MORMON AND DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS

While delivering his glorious message of a book “written upon gold plates,” the angel Moroni “said that the fulness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it” (Joseph Smith—History 1:34). After outlining the means by which the book was to be translated, Moroni began quoting prophecies of the Old and New Testaments. He first quoted from the



DETAIL FROM CHRIST AND THE RICH YOUNG RULER, BY HEINRICH HOFMANN; PHOTOGRAPH OF SPANISH TRIPLE COMBINATION AND BOOK OF MORMON BY LANA LESHMAN

third chapter of Malachi and then the fourth chapter. Doctrine and Covenants section 2 contains a brief account of this visitation.

Then in the summer of 1828 the Prophet Joseph Smith received two additional revelations in connection with the translation of the Book of Mormon: sections 3 and 10 have to do with the 116 pages of manuscript entrusted to Martin Harris that he might “carry the writings home and show them” (*History of the Church*, 1:21).

In February 1829 Joseph Smith Sr. came to visit his son. He was fully aware of all that had transpired: the vision of the Father and the Son to young Joseph, the promise spoken by the Lord “that the fullness of the Gospel should at some future time be made known” (*History of the Church*, 4:536), the appearances of the angel Moroni, the receipt of the gold plates, the work of translation, the loss of 116 pages of manuscript, and the taking away and return of the plates and the Urim and Thummim. On this occasion, the Prophet Joseph inquired of the Lord in behalf of his father and received section 4, which begins, “Now behold, a marvelous work is about to come forth among the children of men.” The translation of the Book of Mormon was part of and essential to the accomplishment of the Lord’s marvelous latter-day work.

In March 1829 Martin Harris was deeply repentant and sorrowful over losing the 116 pages of translation, and he again journeyed to Harmony, Pennsylvania. He pleaded with Joseph to inquire of the Lord in his behalf. Once again the Prophet received another revelation, section 5, wherein Martin Harris was called to witness of the gold plates if he would repent and humble himself before the Lord.

In April 1829 Oliver Cowdery, hearing that Joseph had received the plates, journeyed to Harmony, Pennsylvania, and immediately became involved in the work of translation, assisting Joseph as a scribe (see *History of the Church*, 1:32–33). During this month, sections 6, 8, and 9 were given as questions arose from the translation of the Book of Mormon.

Section 13 is another wonderful example of revelation to the Prophet in answer to questions encountered while translating the Book of Mormon. Said Joseph: “We still continued the work of translation, when, in the ensuing month (May, 1829), we on a certain day went into the woods to pray and inquire of the Lord respecting baptism for the remission of sins, *that we found mentioned in the translation of the plates*. While we were thus employed, praying and calling upon the Lord, a messenger from heaven descended in a cloud of light, and having laid his hands upon us, he ordained us, saying:

“Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins” (Joseph Smith—History 1:68–69; emphasis added in verse 68; see also D&C 13).

This heavenly messenger, who identified himself as “John, the same that is called John the Baptist in the New Testament,” further explained to Joseph and Oliver “that he acted under the direction of Peter, James and John who held the keys of the Priesthood of Melchizedek, which Priesthood he said would in due time be conferred on us” (*History of the Church*, 1:40). Thus the coming forth of the Book of Mormon not only

While delivering his glorious message of a book “written upon gold plates,” the angel Moroni “said that the fulness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it.”

resulted in numerous revelations contained in the Doctrine and Covenants but also was the catalyst for the restoration of the holy Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods, preparatory to the reestablishment of the Church and kingdom of God in these latter days.

Sections 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 all further illustrate the relationship between the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants.

TEACHINGS ABOUT THE BOOK OF MORMON'S IMPORTANCE

A little over a year and a half after the translation and publication of the Book of Mormon and the organization of the Church, the Lord revealed His “preface” to the Doctrine and Covenants, as contained in section 1. In this revealed preface, the Lord testified that the Prophet Joseph Smith was given power to translate the Book of Mormon “through the mercy of God, by the power of God” (D&C 1:29).



MORONI VISITS JOSEPH SMITH, BY DALE MIBOURN; INSET: JOSEPH SMITH RECEIVING THE PLATES, BY KENNETH RILEY

In section 3, the Lord stated some of His purposes for bringing forth the Book of Mormon:

“Inasmuch as the knowledge of a Savior has come unto the world, through the testimony of the Jews, even so shall the knowledge of a Savior come unto my people—

“And to the Nephites, . . . through the testimony of their fathers—

“And this testimony shall come to the knowledge of the Lamanites. . . .

“And for this very purpose are these plates preserved, which contain these records—that the promises of the Lord might be fulfilled, which he made to his people;

“And that the Lamanites might come to the knowledge of their fathers, and that they might know the promises of the Lord, and that they may believe the gospel and rely upon the merits of Jesus Christ, and be glorified through faith in his name, and that through their repentance they might be saved” (D&C 3:16–20; emphasis added).



... and thy ...
forever and ever ...
James 3:1 ...
to Gullie ...
to Chastity ...
Chastity: Modesty ...
King ...
God ...
122 to 18-11 ...
Job 37: 11 ...
(49-52) Jer. 23:7 ...
(7-9) ...
Counsel ...

In section 5 the Lord has much to say about the Book of Mormon's importance in the Restoration of the gospel. The Lord reminded Joseph that "you have *a gift to translate the plates*; and this is the first gift that I bestowed upon you; and I have commanded that you should pretend to no other gift until my purpose is fulfilled in this; for I will grant unto you no other gift until *it [the translation and publication of the Book of Mormon] is finished*" (D&C 5:4; emphasis added). The Lord made it clear to His servant Joseph Smith that the Book of Mormon had to be translated and made available before His great latter-day work proceeded.

Also in section 5, verses 5–16, the Lord explained why the Book of Mormon is so important in the establishment of His kingdom on the earth. In these verses, the Lord repeatedly used the phrase *my words* to refer to the Book of Mormon, which was soon to come forth "through" the Prophet Joseph Smith (see also 3 Nephi 21:9–11). The Lord declared that if the children of men "will not believe *my words* [contained in the Book of Mormon], *they would not believe you, my servant Joseph*" (D&C 5:7; emphasis added).

These few verses of scripture illustrate the great truth declared by the Prophet Joseph "that the Book of Mormon [is] . . . the keystone of our religion" (*History of the Church*, 4:461). A witness of the divinity and truthfulness of the Book of Mormon confirms that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith is a true prophet, and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as organized by the Prophet Joseph, is true. With such a witness of the Spirit, courageous souls from all the nations of the earth are embracing the restored gospel (see D&C 5:16).

The Lord declared to Oliver Cowdery, the Prophet's scribe, "In [the Book of Mormon] are all things written concerning the foundation of my church, my gospel, and my rock."

In Doctrine and Covenants 6:9, the Lord instructed Oliver Cowdery to "assist to bring forth my work." Oliver Cowdery was indeed instrumental in bringing forth the Book of Mormon, which contained the "fulness of the gospel" (see D&C 20:8–9; 27:5; 42:12; 135:3). The Lord would send forth His servants with this record in their hands to "work a marvelous work among the children of men, unto the convincing of many of their sins, that they may come unto repentance, and that they may come unto the kingdom of my Father" (D&C 18:44).

Section 17 of the Doctrine and Covenants contains one of the most clear and powerful of all recorded testimonies of the Book of Mormon. The Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the Book of Mormon is "Another Testament," declares that "my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., . . . has translated the book [of Mormon], even that part which I have

commanded him, and as your Lord and your God liveth it is true" (D&C 17:5–6).

Who can read or hear this testimony and ever wonder how the Lord regards the Book of Mormon? It is a serious thing to hear or to read and ponder these words, for they are sufficient to condemn us if we should ever reject the Book of Mormon or be unfaithful to the cause of Christ and His kingdom (see D&C 5:15, 18).

In June 1829 the Lord declared to Oliver Cowdery, the Prophet's scribe, this powerful testimony to the truthfulness and importance of the Book of Mormon: "Behold, I have manifested unto you, by my Spirit in many instances, that *the things which you have written are true*. . . .

"And . . . I give unto you a commandment, that you rely upon the things which are written;

“For in them are all things written concerning *the foundation of my church, my gospel, and my rock.*”

“Wherefore, if you shall build up my church, upon the foundation of my gospel and my rock, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you” (D&C 18:2–5; emphasis added). Thus, the Book of Mormon contains the fundamental teachings of the restored Church of Jesus Christ, as the Lord Himself testified.

Section 20 contains extensive discussion of the Book of Mormon. It is significant that the revelation to formally organize the Church was not given until the Book of Mormon was translated and published. After confirming that Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were duly called of God and authorized to organize and give leadership to His Church, the Lord declared the following:

“[God] gave him [the Prophet Joseph Smith] power from on high, by the means which were before prepared, to translate the Book of Mormon;

“Which contains a record of a fallen people, and the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles and to the Jews also;

“Which was given by inspiration, and is confirmed to others by the ministering of angels, and is declared unto the world by them [the Three Witnesses]—

“Proving to the world that the holy scriptures are true, and that God does inspire men and call them to his holy work in this age and generation, as well as in generations of old;

“Thereby showing that he is the same God yesterday, today, and forever. . . .

“Therefore, having so great witnesses [Joseph Smith, the Three Witnesses, the Eight Witnesses, and even those who compiled the Book of Mormon], by them shall the

world be judged, even as many as shall hereafter come to a knowledge of this work [the Book of Mormon].

“And those who receive it in faith, and work righteousness, shall receive a crown of eternal life” (D&C 20:8–14).

In section 84 the Lord made another significant reference and gave a sobering warning with regard to the Book of Mormon. To the Saints in 1832 the Lord said:

“And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—

“Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation.

“And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all.

“And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and *remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former*

commandments which I have given them, *not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written*” (D&C 84:54–57; emphasis added).

On several occasions President Ezra Taft Benson challenged members of the Church to study, use, and abide by the precepts of the Book of Mormon to free themselves from that same condemnation pronounced upon the early Latter-day Saints (see *A Witness and a Warning* [1988], 6–8).

CONCLUSION

Truly the Lord has much to say about the Book of Mormon in the Doctrine and Covenants. These two volumes of scripture are indeed inseparable and powerful witnesses of the divinity of Christ and of His great latter-day work. President Benson explained the

The Lord has commanded the Saints to “remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon . . . , not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written.”

important relationship of these two sacred books:

“Excluding the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants is by far the greatest external witness and evidence which we have from the Lord that the Book of Mormon is true. . . .

“The Doctrine and Covenants is the binding link between the Book of Mormon and the continuing work of the Restoration through the Prophet Joseph Smith and his successors. . . .

“The Book of Mormon brings men to Christ. The Doctrine and Covenants brings men to Christ’s kingdom, . . .

“The Book of Mormon is the ‘keystone’ of our religion, and the Doctrine and Covenants is the capstone, with continuing latter-day revelation. The Lord has placed His stamp of approval on both the keystone and the capstone” (“The Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants,” *Ensign*, May 1987, 83). □



DETAIL FROM THE SECOND COMING, BY HARRY ANDERSON; INSET: PAINTING BY ROBERT T. BARRETT



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JED CLARK

Why Does Our All-Loving Heavenly Father Allow Bad Things to Happen to Innocent People?

Answers are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.

LIAHONA'S ANSWER

Our mortal sojourn includes unpleasant experiences such as sickness, loneliness, injury, calamity, injustice, and death. Life may not always seem to be “fair.”

The question of why God allows bad things to happen to innocent people has been asked by most of us at one time or another. It is the gospel that helps us understand the necessity of adversity. If we understand the plan of salvation and view our experiences with an eternal perspective, we may come to understand and accept the lessons of mortality as necessary for spiritual growth. We recognize that we are blessed with agency to choose how to respond to those lessons.

In 1955 Elder Spencer W. Kimball, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, gave an answer to this question in a talk titled “Tragedy or Destiny?” Elder Kimball listed several tragedies, then asked the following questions:

“Was it the Lord who directed the plane into the mountain to snuff out the lives of its occupants, or were there mechanical faults or human errors?”

“Did our Father in heaven cause the collision of the cars that took six people into eternity, or was it the error of the driver who ignored safety rules?”

“Did God take the life of the young mother or prompt the child to toddle into the canal or guide the other child into the path of the oncoming car?”

“Did the Lord cause the man to suffer a heart attack? Was the death of the missionary untimely?” (*Faith Precedes the Miracle* [1972], 96).

He then continued:

“Answer, if you can. I cannot, for though I know God has a major role in our lives, I do not know how much he causes to happen and how much he merely permits. Whatever the answer to this question, there is another I feel sure about.

“Could the Lord have prevented these tragedies? The answer is, Yes. The Lord is omnipotent, with all power to control our lives, save us pain, prevent all accidents, drive all planes and cars, feed us, protect us, save us from labor, effort, sickness, even from death, if he will. But he will not. . . .

“The basic gospel law is . . . agency and eternal development. To force us to be careful or righteous would be to nullify that fundamental law and make growth impossible. . . .

“If we looked at mortality as the whole of existence, then pain, sorrow, failure, and short life would be calamity. But if we look upon life as an eternal thing stretching far into the premortal past and on into the eternal post-death future, then all happenings may be put in proper perspective.

“Is there not wisdom in his giving us trials that we might rise above them, responsibilities that we might achieve, work to harden our muscles,

sorrows to try our souls? Are we not exposed to temptations to test our strength, sickness that we might learn patience, death that we might be immortalized and glorified?

“If all the sick for whom we pray were healed, if all the righteous were protected and the wicked destroyed, the whole program of the Father would be annulled and the basic principle of the gospel, . . . agency, would be ended. No man would have to live by faith.

“If joy and peace and rewards were instantaneously given the doer of good, there could be no evil—all would do good but not because of the rightness of doing good. There would be no test of strength, no development of character, no growth of powers, no . . . agency, only satanic controls.

“Should all prayers be immediately answered according to our selfish desires and our limited understanding, then there would be little or no suffering, sorrow, disappointment, or even death, and if these were not, there would also be no joy, success, resurrection, nor eternal life and godhood” (*Faith Precedes the Miracle*, 96–97).

Yes, some might rashly blame Heavenly Father for not preventing the bad things that happen to us and our loved ones. Some even become embittered. But after we have passed the portals of death and see with an eternal perspective, we will undoubtedly praise

Him for His mercy, His love, and His wisdom in allowing precisely those experiences that are designed to help us reach our full eternal potential and become even as He is.

READERS' ANSWERS

We all experience suffering. And suffering is not always the result of sin. Suffering sometimes has a larger purpose, part of which is our education. Our Heavenly Father loves us completely. He knows our strengths and weaknesses. We know that this life is a time to prepare, a time to learn, and a time to progress. All we have to do is endure in faithfulness as we trust in the Lord, work diligently to overcome our challenges, and avoid complaining against Him.

Ruben C. dela Cuadra,

Narvacan Ward,

Narvacan Philippines Stake

When we regard hardships or tribulations as stepping-stones to return to our heavenly home, we will courageously and wisely confront those trials by seeking strength and guidance from the Lord. We will have faith that we will receive comfort and rewards either in this life or in the life to come.

Rei Cheng Tsai,

P'ingtung Branch,

P'ingtung Taiwan District

God allows people to use their agency so that if someone injures an



Ruben C. dela Cuadra



Rei Cheng Tsai



Ivonete Macedo de Almeida



Franck William N'Sondi



Nelfa Awing Gumarang



Stella 'Ajilong

innocent person, he or she will be judged for having done it, and the injured person will have restitution in due time, even if not in this life.

But when something bad happens to an innocent person because of a natural catastrophe, it may also have a divine purpose. Perhaps it is to alert us about something; perhaps it is a test of our faith; perhaps it gives us an opportunity to serve our neighbor.

*Ivonete Macedo de Almeida,
Jardim Maria do Carmo Ward,
São Paulo Brazil Stake*

Latter-day Saints are blessed to know the purposes and objectives of the plan of salvation. We also know that our tribulations, persecutions, and trials are a ladder that can lift us to God. The hymn "Come, Come, Ye Saints" (Hymns, number 30) teaches us the answer to this question: Why get discouraged when we know eternal happiness awaits?

*Franck William N'Sondi,
Ouenze Branch,
Brazzaville Republic of Congo District*

It was really difficult for my family when my father died a few years ago. I fervently prayed and asked the Lord what we had done to deserve this unfortunate event. Then the Holy Ghost assured me that my father's death could actually make our faith in Jesus Christ stronger. We should always remember that adversity can make us strong and that

adversity is part of Heavenly Father's purposeful plan.

*Nelfa Awing Gumarang,
Tuao Branch,
Philippines Ilagan Mission*

Sometimes Heavenly Father permits the innocent to be slain that they may enter His rest and His judgment may come upon the wicked (see Alma 60:13). He has promised that those who die in Him "shall not taste of death, for it shall be sweet unto them" (D&C 42:46).

*Stella 'Ajilong,
Kololo Branch,
Kampala Uganda District*

You can make the QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS section helpful by answering the question below. Please mail your answer to arrive no later than 1 April 2001. Send it to QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS 04/01, Liahona, Floor 24, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3223, USA; or e-mail to CUR-Liahona-IMag@ldschurch.org. Your answer may be typed or clearly written in your own language. For your answer to be considered, it must include your full name, age, home address, and ward and stake (or branch and district). If possible, include a photograph of yourself; this photograph will not be returned. A representative selection of answers will be published.

QUESTION: *What can we do when people are talking about inappropriate things at school? □*

PUTTING ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD

It is time to give ourselves to the Master and allow Him to lead us into fruitful fields where we can enrich a world filled with darkness and misery,” said Sister Mary Ellen Smoot, Relief Society general president. “Each of us, no matter who we are, no matter where we serve, must arise and make the most of each opportunity that comes. We must follow the counsel given by the Lord and His servants and make our homes houses of prayer and havens of security and safety. We can and must deepen our faith by increasing our obedience and sacrifice” (“Rejoice, Daughters of Zion,” *Liahona*, January 2000, 114).

Sometimes it may seem difficult to rise above the world to that level

of righteousness. But as we strive to “take unto [ourselves] the whole armour of God,” we will “be able to withstand in the evil day” (Ephesians 6:13).

HOW TO PUT ON THE ARMOR OF GOD

President N. Eldon Tanner (1898–1982), First Counselor in the First Presidency, observed that “those who are clothed in such armor, which means keeping *all* the commandments of God, are able to withstand the adversary.”

He continued: “Are we studying the scriptures so that we can increase our knowledge and faith and testimony regarding the gospel? . . . Are we honest and truthful in our dealings? Do we keep the Sabbath day holy? Do we observe the Word of Wisdom? Do we pay an honest tithing? . . . Are we virtuous and clean and pure in heart and mind and deed?

“Do we fight against the evils around us . . . ? Do we have the courage to stand up for our convictions? Can we truly say we are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ? Do we live peaceably with our neighbors and avoid gossip and backbiting and spreading unfounded rumors? Do we truly love our neighbors as ourselves?

“If we can answer yes to these

questions, then we will have on the whole armor of God, which will protect us from harm and preserve us from our enemies” (“Put on the Whole Armor of God,” *Ensign*, May 1979, 44, 46).

DAILY SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

Sister Lucile Johnson of the Timpanogos Park First Ward, Orem Utah North Stake, now in her 80s, learned early in life to don her spiritual “armor” at the beginning of each day. She remembers “arising early in the morning, before my husband and children were up. I found that kneeling in the stillness of my living room, I could begin pleading with our Father for my needs for that day. This brought me great peace, and I learned that He was my helper and protector. Then I would open my scriptures and partake of their inspiration and guidance. Before I got off my knees each morning to begin whatever I had to do, alone or with little children or with teenagers or with my husband in the military and off to war, I knew I would be equal to it.

“That is why I believe in taking the time in the quiet of the early morning hours to study and pray. You will begin your day with a renewing of your spirit. Then you will be truly ready for whatever might come that day.” □



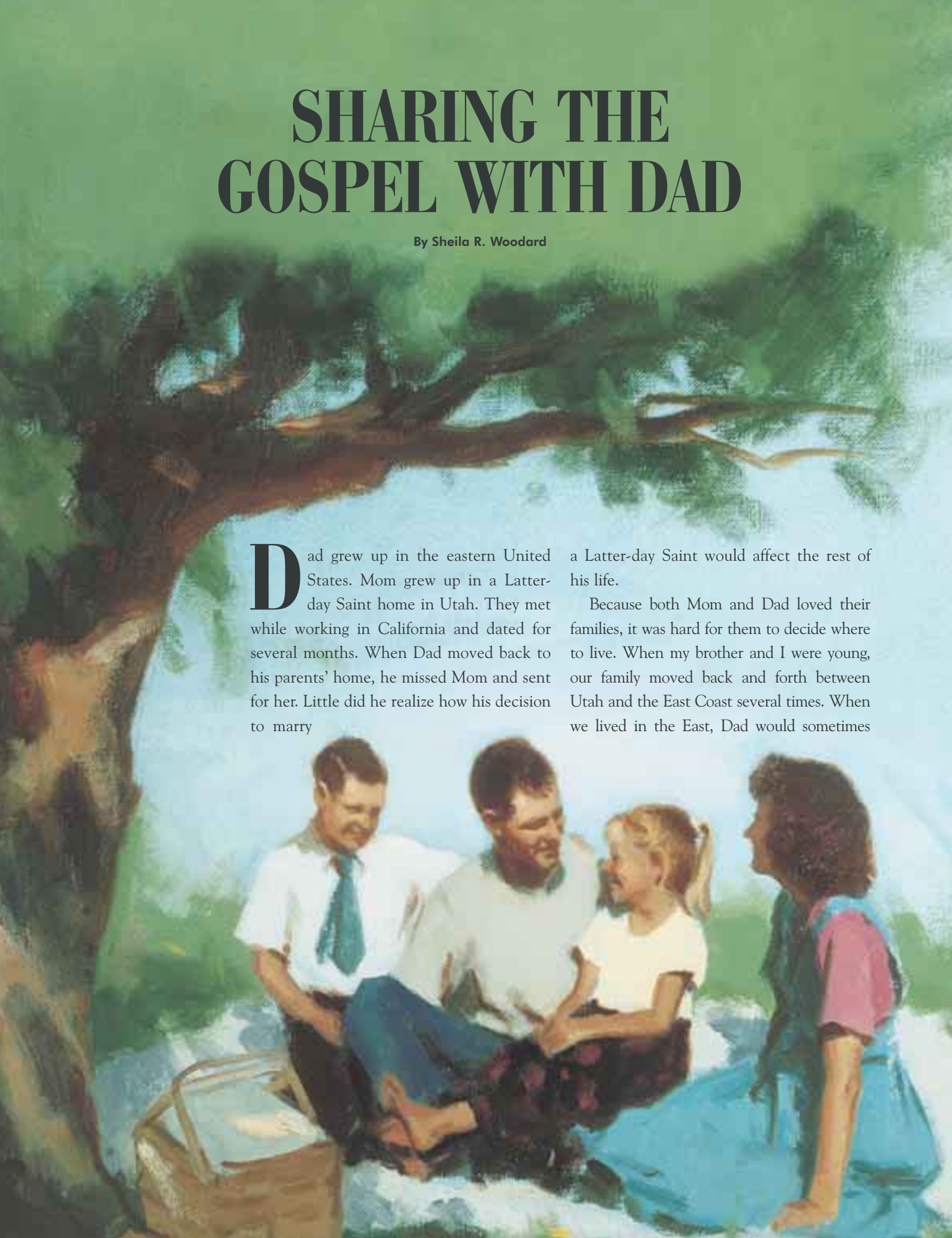
SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH DAD

By Sheila R. Woodard

Dad grew up in the eastern United States. Mom grew up in a Latter-day Saint home in Utah. They met while working in California and dated for several months. When Dad moved back to his parents' home, he missed Mom and sent for her. Little did he realize how his decision to marry

a Latter-day Saint would affect the rest of his life.

Because both Mom and Dad loved their families, it was hard for them to decide where to live. When my brother and I were young, our family moved back and forth between Utah and the East Coast several times. When we lived in the East, Dad would sometimes



drive us to a nearby town so we could attend the LDS branch. He did not feel comfortable going in with us, so he waited in the car.

In good weather we would find a large shade tree to sit under after church, and Dad would get the picnic basket out of the car. As we ate, Mom would encourage my brother and me to tell Dad what we had learned in sacrament meeting.

When we moved west to live near Mom's family, we went to church more often. Although we no longer had picnics, we enjoyed wonderful meals around the dinner table. Each Sunday we would tell Dad what we had learned in church.

Not until my brother and I were older did we realize how much we were missing because Dad did not come to church with us. We realized if we wanted him to go with us, he would need to be taught and baptized. Thus began our relentless efforts to share the gospel with Dad. But as the months stretched into years, we sometimes wondered if he would ever be baptized.

When I was nine, another brother was born into our family. Once again, Dad heard all the Primary lessons at the dinner table. By now, Dad was attending church with us once in a while. He would even invite the missionaries over for meals and listen to the discussions. But he would not commit to baptism.

When my older brother was called on a mission, we realized our little band of sibling missionaries would be sorely depleted. "Don't worry," my brother reassured us. "I'll keep working on Dad from the mission field." He was true to his word. In almost every letter he sent home, he was full of missionary zeal and would ask the golden question. "Dad," he would write, "when are you going to be baptized?" But although Dad took the missionary discussions over and over, he still didn't feel ready.

When I turned 21, I received a mission call to Uruguay. I wrote home every week, and I always included positive missionary experiences. Then I would talk about

the baptisms we had had and ask, "Dad, when are you going to be baptized?"

On the day I turned 22, I received a birthday card with a message from Mom. "Your father is taking the missionary lessons again," she wrote. "This time, he has committed to baptism!"

From then on, whenever a letter arrived from home, I fully expected to learn that Dad had been baptized. But the news did not come. And then I received a brief note from Mom: "Your father has decided not to be baptized at this time." My heart sank. What had gone wrong? Had something in one of my letters caused Dad to back away? Over the next several months, I prayed a great deal for him. I kept writing, encouraging him to stay in contact with the missionaries.

Six months later, I received a startling message: "You are to call home immediately." Alarmed, my companion and I ran all the way to the offices where international calls could be made. A telephone operator instructed me to wait in a phone booth while she placed the call for me.

When the phone rang, I picked it up. My mother was on the line. "What's the matter?" I asked, panicked.

"Sheila," she responded, in an excited and very happy voice, "your father was baptized today. He woke up this morning and said, 'I want to be baptized. Will you call the bishop and ask him if it's all right to do it today?' So I called the bishop, and he arranged everything." My older brother had performed the ordinance in the ward meetinghouse at noon.

As Mom spoke, my fear vanished and my heart filled with gratitude and joy. After all the years of working and waiting and praying, we were finally a complete member family. □

Sheila R. Woodard is a member of the Idaho Falls 28th Ward, Idaho Falls Idaho Central Stake.





INSIGHT AND COUNSEL FROM PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY

Words of the Living Prophet

EVERY YOUNG MAN A MISSIONARY

“It should be the ambition, the desire, the hoped-for experience of every young man in this Church to go into the world as a teacher of the eternal gospel, as a missionary of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I don’t know where you’ll go, . . . but it will prove to be a tremendous and wonderful experience for you. You will live close to the Lord. You will pray as you never prayed before. You’ll teach and you’ll do great good that will bless your life as long as you live.

“I want to urge you to save and prepare and think of and dream of and pray for the experience of a mission in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”¹

MARRY WITHIN THE CHURCH

“We ought to marry within the Church. Our lives will be richer and happier if we marry within the Church. . . . We will believe in the same things; we won’t quarrel over doctrine or anything of that kind.”²

OPPOSITION TO THE CHURCH

“Opposition comes of misunderstanding. As we are able to give people an increased understanding of this Church, its motives, its history,

its practices, its outlook, that opposition will fade, will take on a different color. There still may be opposition, but it won’t be driving us out of Nauvoo or driving us across Missouri in the snow or things of that kind. It will be of a different kind and probably more sophisticated and difficult to meet in some circumstances.”³

PROMISE OF ETERNAL LIFE

“The Lord in His great mercy, the Lord in His love for us, has made it possible for us to be brought together under the authority of the holy priesthood in a relationship which will last beyond death, and over which death will have no control. No great man or woman of government, no military leader, no great businessman, no great educator, no great professional man can make that kind of promise. He may attain to the highest honors of men, but he will have no control over the destiny of men and women when they pass the threshold of death.”⁴

TEMPLE WORTHINESS

“Get a temple recommend and never, never, as long as you live, think anything, say anything, do anything which would make you ineligible for that temple recommend.

And if you will live up to all the requirements of a temple recommend, you may be sure that you are living the gospel and doing what the Lord expects of you.”⁵

ACKNOWLEDGE THE LORD

“It is so very important that you do not let praise and adulation go to your head. Adulation is poison. You better never lose sight of the fact that the Lord put you where you are according to His design, which you don’t understand. Acknowledge the Lord for whatever good you can accomplish and give Him the credit and the glory and [do] not worry about that coming to yourself. If you can do that, you’ll get along all right and will go forward with a love for the people and a great respect for them and [will] try to accomplish what your office demands of you.”⁶

BELIEVE IN YOURSELVES

“Believe in yourselves. Believe in your capacity to do great and good and worthwhile things. Believe in the nature within you, the divine nature, that you are in very deed a son or daughter of the living God. There is something of divinity within you, something that stands high and tall and noble. Get above the dirt and the

filth of the earth and walk on a higher plane with your heads up, believing in yourselves and in your capacity to act for good in the world and make a difference.”⁷

WHAT DOES THE LORD EXPECT?

“What does the Lord expect of us as Latter-day Saints? What does He expect of me as a member of this Church? He expects me to show a love for God in the manner in which I live my life. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, might, mind, and strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself (see Matthew 22:37–39).

“There is no room in the heart of a Latter-day Saint for bitterness, for unkindness, for animosity to any other of the sons and daughters of God. They may not be of our faith, but we owe them an obligation to treat them as sons and daughters of our Father in Heaven.

“He expects us to develop in our hearts and lives a profound love for the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior and the Redeemer of the world. That will find its best expression in the service which we give to others.

“He expects each of us to be faithful members of the Church; to do what we are asked to do; to move the

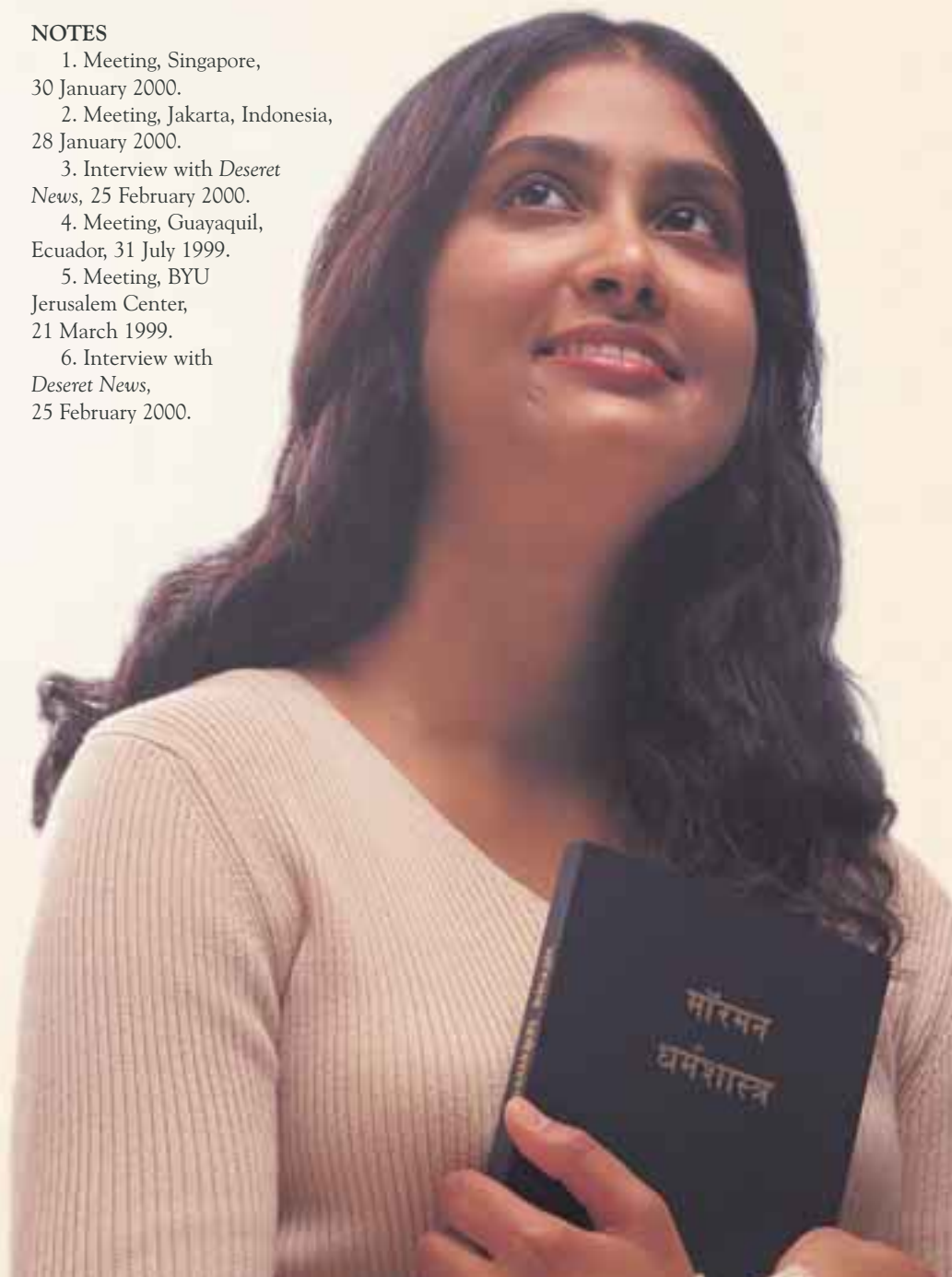
work forward; to serve wherever we are called to serve and build the kingdom in the world.”⁸ □

NOTES

1. Meeting, Singapore, 30 January 2000.
2. Meeting, Jakarta, Indonesia, 28 January 2000.
3. Interview with *Deseret News*, 25 February 2000.
4. Meeting, Guayaquil, Ecuador, 31 July 1999.
5. Meeting, BYU Jerusalem Center, 21 March 1999.
6. Interview with *Deseret News*, 25 February 2000.

7. Regional conference, Oahu, Hawaii, 22 January 2000.

8. Meeting, Jakarta, Indonesia, 28 January 2000.



Doing What the Lord Expects

We are sons and daughters of God. The implications of this fact are profound. Because “there is something of divinity within” each of us, President Gordon B. Hinckley explains, we have the power to “walk on a higher plane . . . , believing in [our]selves and in [our] capacity to act for good in the world and make a difference.” Our lives become energized by the knowledge that if we live up to the expectations our Heavenly Father has of us, He will keep His promises to us (see D&C

82:10). 🕊 So what does He expect of us? President Hinckley explains: “He expects us to develop in our hearts and lives a profound love for the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior and the Redeemer of the world. That will find its best expression in the service which we give to others” (“Words of the Living Prophet,” *Liahona*, February 2001, 28–29). 🕊 As

the following stories demonstrate, our love for the Savior is often expressed in quiet, unassuming ways as we attempt to make a difference—in the lives of others as well as in our own.



How the Book of Mormon Found Me

By Kwame Opare

Years ago I walked into a bookstore in Kumasi, Ghana. As I moved from shelf to shelf, pulling out one book after another, I spotted a book with a light blue cover, worn and faded. It carried the title *Book of Mormon*. I picked it up, dusted it off, and read a few sentences. I did not understand what I read, and I could not relate it to the Bible. But as I held the book in my hands, I had the

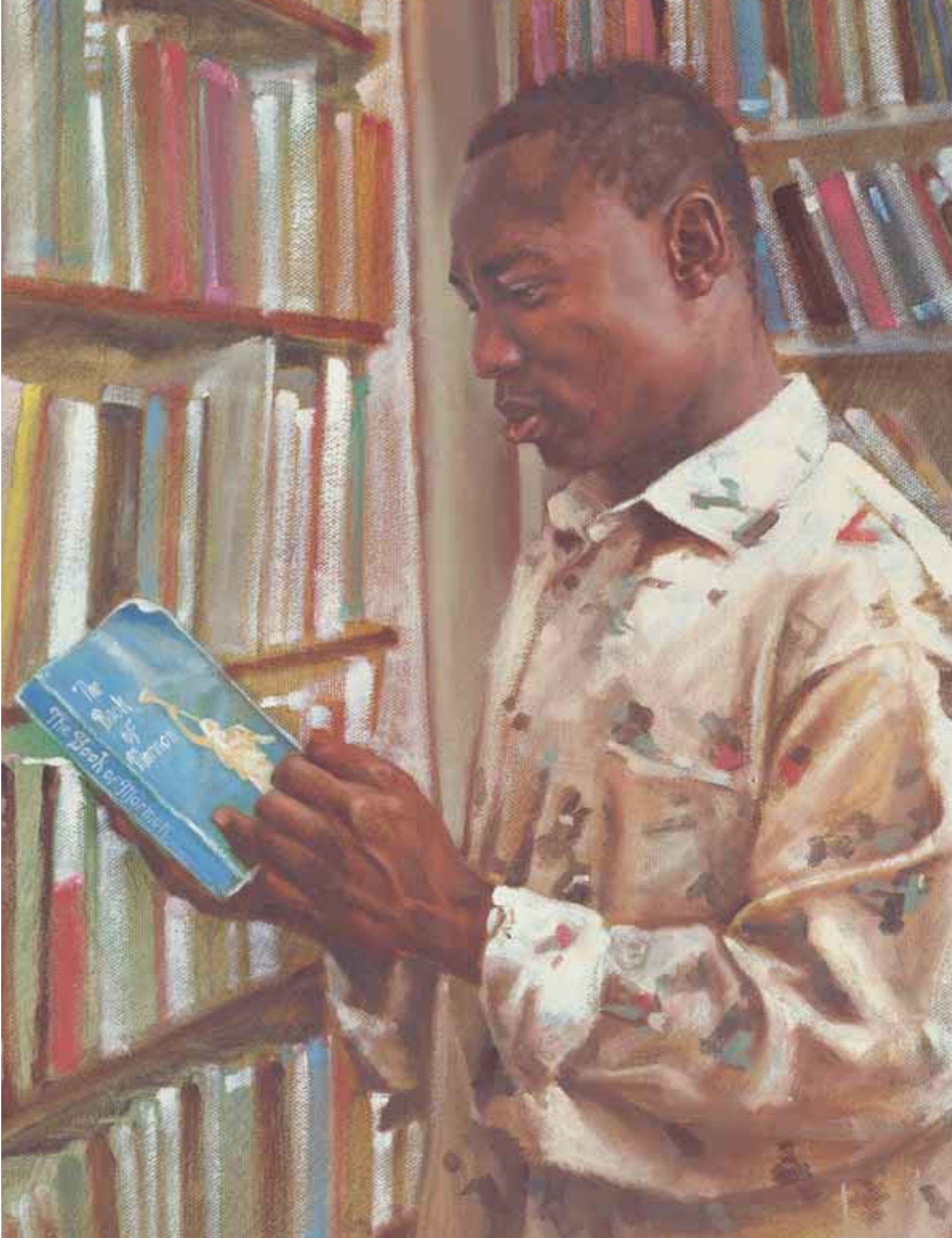
impression it was scripture. However, as I had with other books I had picked up, I put it back on the shelf and continued looking at books.

A few minutes later, I found myself in the same area of the store, and I once again noticed the blue book. This time I looked at the table of contents and found a lot of strange and unfamiliar names. I thought, *If this is scripture, why do I*

not find this information in the Bible? I tried to read a couple of verses but could not understand them. As before, I put it back on the shelf.

I looked at one book after another until, for the third time, I came upon that *Book of Mormon*. I opened it and found a section called Mosiah. *Is he in*

As I moved from shelf to shelf, pulling out one book after another, I spotted a book with a light blue cover, worn and faded. It carried the title *Book of Mormon*.



the Bible? I wondered. My knowledge of scripture began and ended with the Bible. This blue book confused me. I felt as though a battle raged inside me. I had never heard of the book before, but I felt I already knew it. A moment later I found myself paying for it.

For many years the Book of Mormon remained unread on my shelf. I tried to read it a few times, but I simply could not relate to it.

In time, I moved from Ghana to Germany. When I arrived, I began looking for a place to worship. I attended a number of churches but never felt at home. Finally I began to pray and fast to know where to worship. A whole month passed before my answer came.

People from many different countries lived in my apartment building. Distinct among them was a couple who sometimes visited my friend. They were not rich, but they cared for us in many ways. Then one day they invited my friend to go to church with them, and he extended the invitation to me. I asked, "What church are we going to?"

He replied that we were going to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I told him that as long as they preached of Christ, I would go with him.

The day arrived, and we went to church. I looked around at the sea of strange faces. My first impression was of warmth and a sense of belonging. I was also happy to see

young men administering the sacrament. I had never seen anything like that anywhere.

After sacrament meeting, those visiting for the first time were invited to attend the Gospel Principles class. The topic of discussion that day was the eternal nature of families. I was thrilled with all I heard. All too soon the class was over. I asked the teacher if he was going to continue with the same topic the next week, and he said yes. I decided to return the following Sunday.

The next session was priesthood meeting. The lesson was about managing family finances. *What a church!* I thought. *The gospel and home management all in one!*

After priesthood meeting, the couple who brought us to church, recognizing my interest, asked if I would like to hear lessons on the restored gospel. "Sure," I said. And then, while I was basking in the spirit of the day's meetings, I suddenly remembered that shop where I bought an old, worn copy of the Book of Mormon. The incident in the shop, which I considered rather insignificant at the time and had long forgotten, now took on great meaning.

My lessons began and continued without a break. It was a joy to learn the gospel from these couple missionaries. They looked upon me not only as a brother but as a son. Lessons completed, I was baptized.

I have meditated often on these

two connected but separate incidents. Why would anyone walk into a shop, find an old book with an unfamiliar title, read a couple of sentences he couldn't understand, and then buy the book? Does that make sense? Still, I believe that much of what reason alone cannot explain actually makes a lot of sense to the Lord. He prepares our path, and when we are ready to receive His word He leads us to the right people and into the right situations. Often, long before we start searching for God, He is looking for us.

Kwame Opare is a member of the Munich Fourth Ward, Munich Germany Stake.

Charity and the Cyclops Cake

By Nikki O. Nelson

A few weeks after my husband died unexpectedly, I came home from work tired and depressed. My sons met me at the door with two pieces of interesting information: we still had no water (it had stopped running in the middle of the night), and in about two hours there was a Cub Scout fathers and sons' cake contest and sale, and they needed a cake.

When I walked into the kitchen, I could see that dirty dishes had multiplied alarmingly. There was hardly any space for mixing a cake, and we still needed to solve our water problem!

I located a simple cake recipe and recruited a son, against his will, to give

his younger brothers directions. Then I changed clothes, rummaged around in the barn for a pipe wrench, and crawled down into the well. I had watched my husband fix the pump several times and had no doubt that in a few minutes I could have it running.

The connections looked OK. I rattled the switch box to get the bugs out of it and tapped it with the wrench. Nothing. I kicked the pipe. Nothing. I mashed my finger while trying to unscrew the plug to prime it. It wouldn't budge. Nothing worked.

I must have spent an hour down the well trying everything I could think of. I despaired. *What on earth am I doing down in this hole hammering on a stupid pump when I should be in a nice, clean kitchen being a mother? Why do my children have to go through life and Cub Scout cake sales without a father? Is this fair?*

Unable to fix the water problem, I gave up and went to the meeting—late. I sat on a chair in the back of the hall, and the boys took their sad little cake to the table at the front. There were cakes that looked like Cub Scout caps, cakes with trees and birds, cakes with patriotic flags. Then there was our cake. My sons had decorated it to look like Cyclops, with one giant eyeball made of purple and blue frosting in the middle. They had added lots of wiggly red lines to make the eyeball look bloodshot.

I sat there in the dark feeling sorry for myself. When I could no longer

keep back the tears of frustration and self-pity, I slipped out and went into the rest room.

A Relief Society sister in the group saw me go. She followed me, and before long I had poured out the entire story. She put her arm around me, gave me

a hug, and then suggested the names of a couple of reliable plumbers. *Plumbers?* What a novel idea! It was

The cake sale began. My boys stood on the stage, grinning and holding the grotesque eyeball cake.



revolutionary to me. When the water doesn't work on a farm, you tell your husband, and he tinkers around with the pump for a little while, and everything is OK. It had never crossed my mind to call a plumber! I realized that maybe it would be all right to make decisions that were different from how my husband would have done things. Maybe things would look up after all.

At the end of the evening, the cake sale began. My boys stood on the stage, grinning and holding the grotesque eyeball cake. A sweet little grandmother ended up paying a respectable price for it. As she went up on stage to get the cake, she said she couldn't tell exactly what it was supposed to be, but she really liked the colors. My boys, thank goodness, just smiled and kept their mouths shut.

Those two wonderful women knew about charity. In a simple way, they each saw a need and then spontaneously went out of their way to fill it. They would probably say it was just a small thing; I doubt they even remember the incident. But it was not a small thing to me.

Jesus Christ showed us our pattern. He taught us charity. He was sensitive to the needs of those He loved, and He loves us all. He teaches us likewise to be sensitive to each other, to love and comfort and lift each other. I think that's part of the reason we are here.

That day, I learned that when it

comes to practicing charity, sometimes the little things can make a big difference.

Nikki O. Nelson is serving in the Australia Brisbane Mission.

I Felt Comfort— but Why?

By Alan L. Olsen

In 1980 I was a missionary serving in the Philippines Cebu Mission when I was transferred to a city called Ormoc. This district had normally shown steady growth, but for several months there had been very few baptisms.

I arrived in Ormoc on 28 October and met my new companion, Elder Alexander. The first few weeks were extremely slow for us. We had few teaching appointments and almost no referrals. In spite of working long hours and praying to find people to teach, we met with very little success. I remember praying for guidance and receiving confirmation that the Lord was preparing people for us to teach.

On 15 November Elder Alexander and I were tracting in the Barrio Isla Verde, a community on a small island in the Ormoc River. To get there we had to cross the shallow river some 23 meters on stepping-stones, which proved to be a feat in itself. However, the local residents traveled the path with ease.

While there, we met Petronilo and Andrea Ygonia and their grandson

Allan Sueto Sungahid. They accepted our invitation to hold a family home evening in their home. That evening was the beginning of a beautiful relationship. After playing some games, we introduced a gospel message and bore our testimonies.

Our visits continued with this family for the next two weeks. It was exciting to watch as their countenances began to shine. By the end of November all three had committed to be baptized the following month.

I will never forget the teaching experience we had in the Ygonias' home on 2 December. Brother Loa, the ward mission leader, came with us to a neighborhood meeting at the Ygonias'. More than 30 neighbors had accepted the Ygonias' invitation to listen to the first discussion. As we bore testimony, the Spirit became so strong I believe everyone present was touched.

We explained that the warm, peaceful feeling each person was experiencing was the presence of the Holy Ghost. Prompted by the Spirit, we invited each person in that room to continue investigating the Church and commit to baptism. All 30 neighbors accepted the invitation.

Brother and Sister Ygonia, their grandson, and seven others were baptized in December. The work in Ormoc had begun to prosper once again, due in large part to the faith of this good family. Shortly thereafter I was transferred from Ormoc.

Although I had spent only six weeks there, these weeks were some of the best of my life. Never had I worked harder for such a worthy cause. Never had I felt closer to the Lord. During the six weeks I served there, the Lord had allowed us to teach and baptize 9 souls, and another 30 individuals were preparing for baptism.

Eleven years later, in November 1991, I was sitting in my office at work and suddenly felt a strong feeling of peace and love. The

The Ygonia family accepted our invitation to hold a family home evening. That evening was the beginning of a beautiful relationship.

impression came to me that someone had died, but I could not think of who it might be. I called my wife, Susan, at home and asked if everything was all right. She reassured me, but I still felt the same way.

That evening, I felt impressed to pick up one of my journals. I turned to the pages where I had recorded my experiences in Ormoc. As I read, the Spirit grew stronger and tears came into my eyes. I thought of the wonderful people I had seen embrace the gospel there. Could it be that these strong feelings of comfort were related to my Ormoc experience?

Later that month I read of a devastating typhoon that had hit Ormoc. Twenty-two

members of the Church had died in the flooding. Among them were Brother and Sister Ygonia and their grandson Allan. I also saw the names of other people I had known while serving in Ormoc. Again the familiar warmth and peace of the Comforter entered my heart, and I understood why I had felt its influence earlier.

While I grieved over their deaths, I knew they had returned to our Heavenly Father's presence, where they continue in the work they began here on earth. □

Alan L. Olsen is a member of the Centerville Ward, Fremont California Stake.



Theresia Mangels, an elderly widow, lived alone in an apartment in northern Germany. One evening she heard a knock at her door and opened it to

LINE UPON LINE

Before Birth



find two young men standing there. Remembering that she still had a book their colleagues had left years before, she invited them in, then went to find the book. When she tried to return it, they grinned and refused to take it, telling her the book was actually from another church. They were from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, they said, and asked if they could give her an important message. She was a bit lonely and, besides, they were such nice young men. She agreed to listen.

They taught her that evening about someone named the Prophet Joseph Smith, but their message confused her. Visions and gold plates and angels—it all seemed so strange. They asked if they could come back another time, and she almost said no. But she decided to give them one more chance.

When they returned, they said they were going to teach her about the purpose of life and God's plan of salvation. That sounded interesting. And then they started talking about something she had never heard of before: a premortal existence where all of us lived with God. It was as if a light went on in her soul. This doctrine was true. She could feel it. And it explained so many things she had wondered

about but her church had never been able to clarify. From then on, everything the missionaries taught made perfect sense, and when they invited her to be baptized, she accepted eagerly.

Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: "There is no way to make sense out of life without a knowledge of the doctrine of premortal life.

"The idea that mortal birth is the beginning is preposterous. There is no way to explain life if you believe that.

"The notion that life ends with mortal death is ridiculous. There is no way to face life if you believe that.

"When we understand the doctrine of premortal life, then things fit together and make sense" ("The Mystery of Life," *Ensign*, November 1983, 18).

Without an understanding of our premortal life we cannot correctly comprehend our relationship with our Heavenly Father, nor can we completely grasp the purpose of this earth life. Mortality becomes a puzzle with crucial pieces missing, and our heavenly heritage seems a mystery, as does our divine destiny. "This doctrine of premortal life," said Elder Packer, "was known to ancient Christians. For nearly five hundred years the doctrine was taught, but it

was then rejected as a heresy by a clergy that had slipped into the Dark Ages of apostasy. Once they rejected this doctrine, . . . they could never unravel the mystery of life. They became like a man trying to assemble a strand of pearls on a string that was too short. There is no way they can put them all together” (*Ensign*, November 1983, 16–17).

When we understand that we lived before birth and came to this earth to be tried and tested, the need for a Savior comes into sharper focus. Even the troubling questions of inequality, disease, and physical disability become much less difficult when seen in the light of the premortal existence.

The Lord has not revealed many details about premortal life. For instance, we don’t know what the premortal existence was like—what we did there, what specific laws and conditions prevailed, how long we lived with our Heavenly Father, or

what the War in Heaven was really like. What has been revealed, however, is sufficient for us to accomplish our purpose here on earth. “Essential facts about our premortal life have been revealed,” said Elder Packer. “Although they are sketchy, they unravel the mystery of life” (*Ensign*, November 1983, 17). A few of these essential facts follow:

- We are God’s literal spirit children, and as such we have the potential to become like Him (see Romans 8:16–17; D&C 93:33–34).
- We attended a Council in Heaven and heard the Father’s plan presented, and we chose to follow Jesus Christ, who offered to come to earth as our Savior and Redeemer (see Abraham 3:24–28).
- Satan rebelled and was cast out of heaven

with “a third part of the hosts of heaven,” and they now work with devilish determination to destroy our souls (see D&C 29:36–39).

- We come to this earth life without the memory of our prior existence, but we do come with individual strengths and talents, as well as weaknesses we must strive to overcome (see Ether 12:27; D&C 104:17; 138:55–56; Abraham 3:23).
- Earth life is not the beginning or the end, but it is both a test and a crucial stage in our ongoing development. Our performance in this test shapes our eternal future (see Abraham 3:25–26). □

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY LANA LEISHMAN



Joseph and Lucy Mack Smith were the first to hear of the appearance of God the Father and Jesus Christ to their son Joseph Smith Jr. Thereafter, they sacrificed all they had for the gospel.

Faithful First Believers

By Donald L. Enders

ILLUSTRATED BY PAUL MANN

As the Prophet Joseph Smith administered ordinances associated with the endowment in the Kirtland Temple in January 1836, he beheld a vision of the celestial kingdom. Searching for words to express “the glory thereof,” he described “the transcendent beauty” of its gate like “circling flames of fire,” its “beautiful streets,” and the Father and the Son seated on “the blazing throne of God” (D&C 137:1–4). To his great joy, he also saw his brother Alvin “and my father and my mother” (D&C 137:5).

Alvin had died 13 years earlier. His virtuous life, support of Joseph’s mission, and obedience to the commandments explain his exaltation. However, Joseph’s parents were still alive, so how could their exaltation be shown?

The answer came as the Lord continued His explanation: “For I, the Lord, will judge all . . . according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts” (D&C 137:9).

What were the works and desires of Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith—these faithful first believers of the restored gospel—that can inspire Latter-day Saints today in our own quest for celestial glory? To be brief, they sought the truth, they found it, and they cleaved to it thereafter (see Matthew 7:8).

In New England, they *sought* gospel truth. In New York, they *found* it. In Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois, they *lived* true to the gospel, not shrinking from sacrifice, poverty, physical suffering, scorn of the world, and sorrow

at the deaths of loved ones. At all stages, they earnestly taught gospel principles to their family, offered selfless service, and testified consistently of God’s goodness.

SEEKING THE GOSPEL

As children, Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack were each raised in pious and industrious New England homes. Joseph, born in 1771 to Asael and Mary Duty Smith of Topsfield, Massachusetts, was the third of 11 children. Lucy, born in 1775, at Gilsum, New Hampshire, was the youngest of Solomon and Lydia Gates Mack’s eight children. Both sets of parents taught their children duty to God, hard work, family unity, literacy, and conduct suitable to polite society.

Both families, like many around them, were “seekers” who took the Bible and personal prayer seriously but felt that mainstream Christianity had departed from the Bible. They were consequently looking forward to a renewal of Christ’s Church. Joseph Sr.’s father, Asael, believed that a latter-day prophet would be born among his descendants. Lucy was deeply affected in childhood and youth by the goodness of her mother and the example of two older sisters who expressed unflinching faith, even in lengthy terminal illnesses. As a young

Joseph Sr. preceded Lucy and the children in the family’s move to Palmyra, New York. When they were reunited, the children surrounded their father and covered his face with tears and kisses.



woman, Lucy sought “a change of heart” that would align her to God.

At age 19, Lucy accompanied her brother Stephen on a business trip to Tunbridge, Vermont, where she met 23-year-old Joseph. A year of friendship turned to love, and they were married on 24 January 1796. It was a promising union. They enjoyed good health, were surrounded by kin and friends, and had money set aside. According to traditional New England culture, such prosperity and social acceptance were signs of favor with God. But during the 20 years they lived in neighboring Vermont and New Hampshire towns, Joseph and Lucy learned the hard but important lesson that life was not as simple as that.

When they moved to Palmyra, New York, in 1816, they had been tried in every possible way. Two of their 10 children had died. They had been impoverished by a national economic downturn and a dishonest business associate. Poor weather had caused crop failures three seasons in a row. Lucy came near death from the consumption that had killed her two sisters. A typhus epidemic attacked all of Joseph and Lucy’s children. Little Sophronia’s life was spared only after her parents poured out their hearts on their knees by her bedside with “grief and supplication.” And young Joseph, age seven or eight, suffered a bone marrow infection—a complication that required almost-crippling surgery. The family’s good reputation had also suffered along with their fortunes, and they were “warned out” of the Vermont village where they lived so that the town would not be required to provide assistance.

It was also a time of spiritual tempering. When Lucy had been given up to die from consumption, she covenanted to serve God all her days and to seek “the religion that would enable [her] to serve him right,” even if “obtained from heaven by prayer and faith.” She was healed and faithfully sought that religion for the next two decades, not yet understanding that her own son would introduce her to it. “For days and months and years,” without ceasing, she “continued asking God . . . to reveal

. . . the hidden treasures of his will.” Joseph Sr.’s mistrust of organized religion did not let him share her quest among the churches she had access to, but it did not become a source of contention between them. Rather, she prayed sincerely for consolation and was comforted by a dream that assured her Joseph Sr. would accept the truth when it was presented to him.

Lucy wrote, “We felt more to acknowledge the hand of God in preserving our lives through such a desperate siege of disease, pain, and trouble than if we had enjoyed health and prosperity.” They forgave their debtors, paid their debts, and unitedly sought to better their fortunes by moving to western New York.

Joseph Sr. preceded Lucy and the children to Palmyra. By the time the family was reunited, their ready money had been reduced to a few cents. But that arrival showed two important traits of the family. First was their unconcealed joy at being reunited. Lucy wrote that she felt joy “in throwing myself and my children upon the care and affection of a tender husband and father” and witnessing the children “surround their father, clinging to his neck and covering his face with tears and kisses that were heartily reciprocated by him.” And second was a united approach to solving their problems. Lucy said, “We all now sat down and maturely counseled together as to what course it was best to take [and] how we should proceed to business.” Joseph Sr., Alvin, and Hyrum worked to pay for land. To maintain home and to replenish provisions, Lucy, aided by Sophronia and the younger children, took care of household chores and sold Lucy’s oilcloth art. They also made baked goods and root beer, which young Joseph sold in the village from a homemade handcart.

FINDING THE GOSPEL

The family’s united effort greatly improved their material circumstances. Two years after arriving in Palmyra as “strangers, destitute of friends, home, or employment,” Lucy wrote, “we were able to settle ourselves upon our



The Smith family approached their problems by counseling together. Their united decisions made each family member an important part of the solution.

own land [in] a snug, comfortable, though humble habitation, built and neatly furnished by our own industry.”

Lucy’s unceasing hunger for spiritual truth was about to bear fruit. In the spring of 1820, her 14-year-old son Joseph experienced the First Vision, wherein he saw the Father and the Son, his sins were forgiven, he was commanded to join no church, and he was instructed that the fulness of the gospel was soon to be restored. Three years later, the heavenly messenger Moroni instructed Joseph that he had been chosen by the Lord to bring forth an ancient book that contained “the fulness of the everlasting Gospel” (Joseph Smith—History 1:34).

Moroni also instructed Joseph to tell his father of the visitation, which he did. His father fully believed, and Joseph had the complete support of his family, including his brothers and sisters. “We were convinced that God was about to bring to light something that we might stay

our minds upon,” wrote Lucy. “We rejoiced in it with exceeding great joy.”

She records a tender memory of the entire family, gathered at the fireside after the day’s labor, listening to young Joseph with the greatest attention as he recounted to them incidents from the Book of Mormon. “The sweetest union and happiness pervaded our house; no jar nor discord disturbed our peace and tranquility reigned in our midst.” Lucy and Joseph Sr. realized this treasure was eternal, while the world could offer only vain things.

Sweet though this knowledge was, the seven years between Moroni’s first visit on 21–22 September 1823 and the official organization of the Church on 6 April 1830 were a time of great testing for Joseph and Lucy. They arranged to purchase forest land in Manchester, New York; began clearing the land; built a log home, barn, and outbuildings; planted an orchard; and began building a large New England-style frame house. By 1830 the farm was numbered among the better ones in the township and was known for its “neatness and arrangement.”

A bitter blow fell when Alvin died suddenly, only six

weeks after the angel Moroni's visitation. The family's "happiness [was] blasted in a moment," and Joseph, Lucy, and the children "were for a time . . . swallowed up in grief." On the heels of this sorrow, they lost the title to their farm. Alvin had earned enough money for all but the last payment "after much labor, suffering, and fatigue" before his death and had also begun the construction of their new frame home. When the first land agent died, there was a misunderstanding, and through deception the carpenter they hired to finish their home acquired the deed. A Quaker gentleman came to their rescue, purchasing the land and allowing them to live in the house and on the farm for the next four years in exchange for their son Samuel's work.

One of Lucy's most poignant memories is her distress when she realized that they were going to lose the home that had been designed by her beloved Alvin for the express purpose of seeing that she and Joseph Sr. would be comfortable in their old age. "I was overcome and fell back into a chair almost deprived of sensibility," she wrote. She asked Hyrum: "What can this mean? . . . How . . . is [it] that all which we have earned in the last 10 years is taken away from us in one instant?" Her feelings were natural, but when they had to move from the home three years later, she told Oliver Cowdery, who was boarding with them: "I now look around me upon all these things that have been gathered together for my happiness which have cost the toil of years. . . . I now give it all up for the sake of Christ and salvation, and I pray God to help me to do so without one murmur or a tear. . . . I will not cast one longing look upon anything which I leave behind me."

She spoke for her husband as well. What they left behind was more than a comfortable home. Resentment had grown steadily toward them because of Joseph's spiritual experiences. Most of their former neighbors and friends shunned them; some actively lied about them. Others took advantage of them, ransacked their property, and pressed petty lawsuits.

To Joseph and Lucy's credit, they did not become bitter and vindictive. "We doubled our diligence in prayer before God that Joseph might be more fully instructed and preserved," wrote Lucy. They were the first to know of and accept Joseph Jr.'s calling, sorrowed with him when the first 116 pages of the Book of Mormon were lost, helped guard the plates, heard the testimony of the Three Witnesses, and were among the earliest to be baptized. Joseph Sr. and two sons, Hyrum and Samuel, were among the Eight Witnesses.

In a sweet moment, Lucy was nearly overawed by the realization that "I [am] indeed the mother of a prophet of the God of heaven—the honored instrument in performing so great work." In another unforgettable moment, her prophet son embraced his father immediately after Joseph Sr.'s baptism and exclaimed, "[Praise to] my God! have I lived to see my own father baptized into the true church of Jesus Christ!"

LIVING THE GOSPEL

Joseph and Lucy's search for religious truth extended from their youth through 34 years of marriage. For the remaining 10 years before Joseph Sr.'s death in 1840, they walked steadfastly on the path before them with confidence that if they served God with all their hearts, they would stand blameless before Him at the last day (see D&C 4:2).

Joseph and Lucy never again owned a home of their own. In Kirtland they lived on a farm a short distance out of town that had been made available to Joseph Jr. Here they lodged, fed, and preached to "droves of company" who were gathering to Kirtland, "breaking [them]selves down with hard work." In Missouri the Prophet Joseph arranged for them and his married sisters to manage an inn in Far West. In Nauvoo, with Joseph Sr. suffering from his final illness, they lived in a small dwelling near Joseph Jr.'s home. Yet their straitened circumstances did not hinder them in fulfilling their baptismal covenant of



Initially distressed at losing her home, Lucy found strength in her faith. “I now give it all up for the sake of Christ,” she said. “I will not cast one longing look upon anything which I leave behind.”

bearing one another’s burdens and standing as witnesses of the gospel (see Mosiah 18:8–9).

Lucy was skilled at nursing, and Joseph was supportive. A Palmyra neighbor praised them as “the best family in the neighborhood in case of sickness, and one was at my house nearly all the time when my father died.” At Far West, Lucy willingly assumed the care of “20 or 30 sick . . . during the mobbing.” When Nauvoo was first settled and “scores of children were dying with the Black Canker” (scurvy), the Prophet Joseph and Hyrum “set apart their dear mother to labor and nurse the sick.” She “spent months amongst the poor, sick Saints.” A young neighbor called Lucy “one of the finest of women, always helping them that stood in need.”

Joseph and Lucy hospitably shared what they had. In the pre-Church years, they welcomed an orphan boy into their

home as well as two elderly folk. A newlywed couple lived with them for several months in Kirtland. In Kirtland, Missouri, and Nauvoo, they often gave every bed in the house to guests, while Joseph and Lucy shared a single blanket on the floor. They fed new arrivals and missionaries, hosted Church councils and meetings, made their home a haven where patriarchal blessings could be given in a spiritual environment, offered personal counsel and doctrinal discussions, and held a family devotional with hymns and prayers every evening.

Their testimony of the gospel’s truthfulness strengthened members and challenged critics. A Palmyra resident purchased Joseph Sr.’s note and demanded instant payment but offered to forgive the debt if he would burn the Book of Mormon. Even though he was ill, Joseph refused and went to debtors’ prison for several weeks.

Ordained an elder in June 1830, Joseph Sr. promptly preached the gospel to his parents and siblings. Despite bitter opposition and indifference on the part of some, his joy was great when his brothers John, Asael Jr., and Silas converted and gathered with the Saints. At age 65,

as Patriarch to the Church, he set out on a patriarchal mission to members in the eastern United States. By the time of his death, he had given several hundred patriarchal blessings of encouragement and inspiration. He served on the Church's first high council at Kirtland and in 1834 was ordained with Hyrum as Assistant President of the Church. At the dedication of the Kirtland Temple, this aged servant of the Lord beheld marvelous things.

Lucy was no whit behind him in valor. When an officer in Lucy's former church pressed her to deny the Book of Mormon, she defied him: "Even you should stick my body full of faggots and burn me at the stake I would declare that . . . record . . . to be true as long as God gave me breath."

On another occasion when some of the elders felt that identifying themselves as Latter-day Saints would bring persecution upon them, Lucy boldly stated, "I [will] tell the people precisely who I [am]." When a minister scoffed that the Book of Mormon was beneath his notice, Lucy testified, "Sir, let me tell you boldly that the Book of Mormon contains the everlasting gospel, and it was written for the salvation of your soul, by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost." Seven months after the murders of Joseph and Hyrum, Lucy, speaking for herself and her dead husband, claimed, "It has been in our hearts to fetch forth this Kingdom that it may roll forth."

Both Joseph Sr. and Lucy received all the temple ordinances then available to Church members. For Joseph Sr., these were preparatory ordinances in the Kirtland Temple. Lucy received her initiatory ordinances and endowment in the Nauvoo Temple on 10 December 1845.

LESSONS FROM LUCY AND JOSEPH

What are the lessons for us today from these faithful believers? First, as parents they taught their children to obey the gospel, to work unitedly and hard, and to pray unceasingly for guidance and desired blessings. Their examples matched their precepts.

Second, they set the example for their children of

valuing truth wherever they found it. They willingly, even joyously, learned from one of their children instead of feeling that as parents they needed to know all the answers.

Third, devotion to the gospel was their first priority. Even when they were called to endure poverty, hopelessness, illness, and scorn, they did not waver in their allegiance to the truth.

Fourth, although they had few means, they shared them willingly and served the other Saints and the community to the limits of their strength.

Fifth, they kept their family together. Whether driven by persecution or drawn by the gathering, Joseph and Lucy, in following the Saints, took even their married children with them, nurturing their faith, nursing them when ill, and providing loving support.

Sixth, they endured to the end. Despite trials and suffering that might have embittered them and caused them to question their faith, they remained devoted. In 1840 Joseph Sr. died as Patriarch to the Church, surrounded by his family and the Saints. Seventy-year-old Lucy remained in Nauvoo with her four living children and her daughter-in-law Emma when the Saints left in 1846, but Lucy's faith in her son Joseph's mission never wavered.

As first believers, she and her husband set a standard of exemplary parenthood and of devotion to each other and to the truth. Their example lights the way for all Latter-day Saint families in our own day. □

Donald L. Enders, a member of the Kaysville 11th Ward, Kaysville Utah South Stake, is senior curator, Historic Sites, Family and Church History Department, with the Museum of Church History and Art.

Endnotes are available in English from Liahona, Floor 24, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3223, USA.

Joseph and Lucy hospitably shared what they had. In Kirtland, Missouri, and Nauvoo, they often gave every bed in the house to guests, while they shared a blanket on the floor.



The Power of Example

By Carlos Pérez

ILLUSTRATED BY PAT GERBER; PHOTOGRAPHY BY CRAIG DIMOND

When I finished high school, I signed up for a year's service in the Ecuadorian army. As I packed my belongings, I included a copy of the Book of Mormon and the hymnbook. At that time, I didn't realize how much that Book of Mormon was going to affect my life.

I was assigned to a company of 104 young men, and after watching their behavior, I guessed I was the only Latter-day Saint. I wanted to be a good example, so I tried to give my best effort to any task I was assigned.

It was almost impossible to find time to read the scriptures. We had only 15 minutes to get ready for lunch and half an hour at night for free time. I spent that time reading the Book of Mormon.

I didn't realize people were watching me, but they soon found out I was a member of the Church. At first they made fun of me, but I knew their words couldn't hurt me. Each day I tried to apply what I had read in the Book of Mormon.

One day as I was reading, I was impressed by 3 Nephi 12:16: "Therefore let your light so shine before this people, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven." I asked Heavenly Father to help me be an example to others. In time, I gained the respect of the men in my company and the officers.

My service in the army went fine until one day my friend discovered the feed to his automatic rifle was missing. In my country, stealing such an item is a serious crime against the government and is punishable with jail time. Our entire company looked for the missing part for three days, which was the time we had been given to find it. I didn't look in my own footlocker because I knew I hadn't taken it.

The captain of the company, a member of an evangelical church, authorized a search of all footlockers.

All members of the company were present when my footlocker was inspected. I was astonished when the searchers found the missing rifle feed in it. I had no idea how it had gotten there.

It was a painful moment for me; I knew the captain could send me to jail. Members of my company stood around watching, concerned with what was going to happen to me. The room was quiet as we waited to hear what the captain would say.

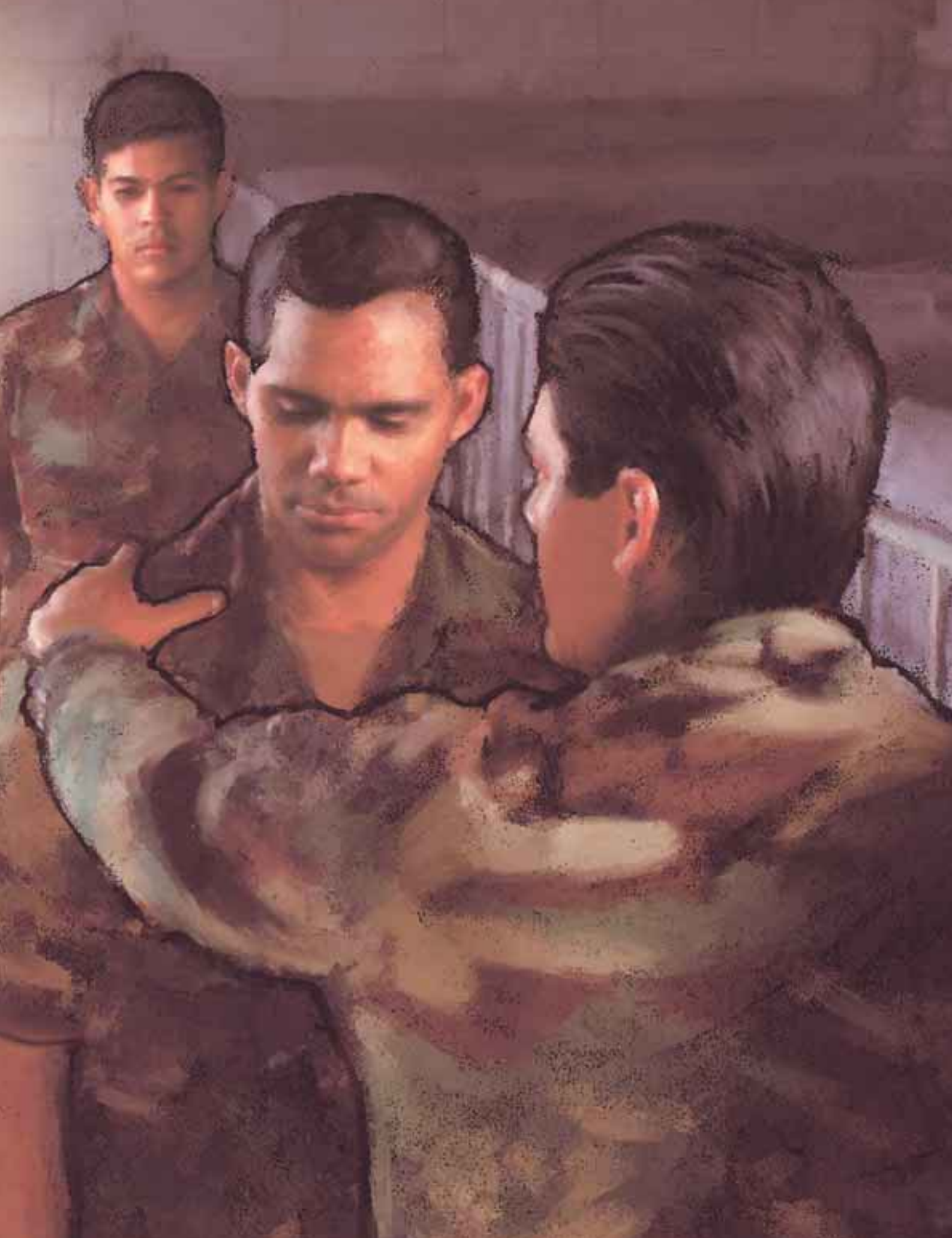
He called me over to him, and in a low voice asked for my explanation. All I could say was, "I don't know." He looked at me, and then he said these words: "I know what your conduct has been all this time, and I know you didn't do it." Then another officer said to the captain, "I, too, believe that this soldier did not do it." One by one, all the other officers came up to me and offered their support.

Until that moment I hadn't fully realized the blessing of obedience or the power of example. Tears began to run down my cheeks. I recognized the protecting power of my Savior. I knew He was at my side. Because of this experience, the verse in 3 Nephi that had impressed me earlier will always be engraved on my mind. I am grateful the Book of Mormon taught me to be a light and an example.

A few days later, one of my friends in the company came to me and told me he had met two missionaries and was going to be baptized the following week in the city of Guayaquil. My happiness was complete as I saw him join the true Church.

I later served full time as a soldier for the Lord—sharing the gospel as a missionary in the Ecuador Quito Mission. I know Jesus Christ lives and is our perfect example. □

Carlos Pérez is a member of the Gallegos Lara Ward, Guayaquil Ecuador Prosperina Stake.



Using the February 2001 *Liahona*

Are you looking for a story or quotation for a talk, class, family home evening lesson, or seminary devotional? You might find some helpful ideas in this issue of the *Liahona*. (The numbers at right refer to pages in this issue. F=*The Friend*.)

DISCUSSION IDEAS: DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS AND CHURCH HISTORY

■ “Uncovering Gospel Roots in Britain,” page 8: The Malvern Hills, the John Benbow farm, and the Gadfield Elm chapel are important because events that took place there strengthened the Church in its early years. Which locations in your area are important in local Church history?

■ “Inseparable Witnesses of Jesus Christ,” page 14: Discuss how ancient scripture prepared the way for modern revelation.

■ “Faithful First Believers,” page 38: How can you apply the six lessons we learn from the lives of the Prophet Joseph Smith’s parents in your family?

■ “Search These Commandments,” page F16: How can your family enjoy studying the “remarkable and inspiring message” of the Doctrine and Covenants the year?



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CALL FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY ARTICLES

We invite you to share with us experiences and ideas that have strengthened your marriage and family. Please send these articles and stories to *Liahona*, Floor 24, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3223, USA; or e-mail to CUR-Liahona-IMag@ldschurch.org. Please include your complete name, address, telephone number, ward and stake (or branch and district).

The Friend

FOR CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS ■ FEBRUARY 2001




Joseph Smith's


By Delores DeVictoria ILLUSTRATED BY JULIE F. YOUNG

Instructions


Carefully remove these two pages from the magazine, and mount them on heavy paper. Cut out the story cards and the figures. Use brass fasteners to make arm and leg joints. Arrange the figures as they are on the story cards, and use the cards and the figures to tell the story of Joseph Smith's First Vision.




1 Fourteen-year-old Joseph Smith did not know which church to join. One day he read in the Bible, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, . . . and it shall be given him" (James 1:5).



2 Joseph decided he would do as the scripture said and ask God which church to join. He went to a grove of trees near his home to pray.



3 As he prayed, a bright light appeared above his head. Then Joseph saw Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. Jesus told him not to join any of the churches. He also told Joseph many other things.



4 When Heavenly Father and Jesus left, Joseph felt a peaceful joy at what he had seen and heard. Joseph returned home and told his family about his experience.



First Vision



Luz Karina Sánchez

OF YAGUARÓN, PARAGUAY

By Mary Ann Whetten Lyman

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD AND MARY ANN WHETTEN LYMAN

Luz Karina Sánchez—a seven-year-old girl in Yaguarón, Paraguay—draws, feeds chickens, and shoots marbles. And she does all these things in a special way—with her feet!

Karina was born without arms, but that doesn't stop her from writing, drawing, turning pages in a book, combing her hair, dressing herself, and eating with a fork. She is an independent and determined girl who figures out how to do with her feet what some people can barely do with their hands. Federico and Isabel Sánchez, Karina's parents, say she figures out how to do things by herself so she can do everything for herself—without help.

Karina's first name is Luz, which means "light" in her native Spanish. After she was born, her mother

felt a special peace and comfort fill her like a light—so she named the baby Luz, after that special feeling. Luz Karina continues to be a light and an example to her mother, the rest of her family, and her friends through her determination, testimony, and love.

The youngest of 12 children, Karina likes being part of a big family. Since most of her brothers and sisters are much older than she is, Karina is especially close to her brother Germán, who is 12 years old. Germán says of Karina, "I like her because she is happy and fun."

Germán always looks out for her. But Karina herself looks out for and takes special care of her two-year-old niece Ruth. She loves Ruth and lets her cling to her sweater sleeve when they are together. Karina walks slowly so Ruth can keep up with her, and she tries to make sure others notice and pay attention to Ruth.

Karina's family joined the Church about one year ago. Since then they have attended the Yaguarón



Branch in the Paraguari Paraguay District. The family lives out in the country about five kilometers from town. So to get to church each week, they walk about one kilometer and then take a bus. Karina likes Primary, especially the singing. About 10 children attend Primary in the Yaguarón Branch.

Karina and Germán are the only two Latter-day Saints at their school. Karina is in the first grade, and her mother is very proud of her schoolwork. Drawing is Karina's favorite subject at school. She likes to draw pictures of flowers, especially poinsettias, a popular flower in Paraguay. She also draws pictures of herself and her family. She always draws herself with arms.

Karina's leg and body muscles are very strong, and she is a good helper and a hard worker on her family's small farm. The farm has a big tom turkey, chickens, and a dog with lots of puppies. Karina loves animals. One of her chores is to feed the chickens. And she has figured out her own method of getting this chore done. She picks up the bag of corn with her foot and places it under her chin to carry it while she walks. Then she sits on a chair, opens the bag of corn with one foot, puts the other foot in the sack for a footful of corn, and throws the corn out for the chickens to eat. Karina also loves to hold the chickens. She carefully catches a baby chick with her feet and holds the soft, fluffy bird under her chin.

Karina also loves to play marbles, and she is very good at it. She frequently beats other children in a

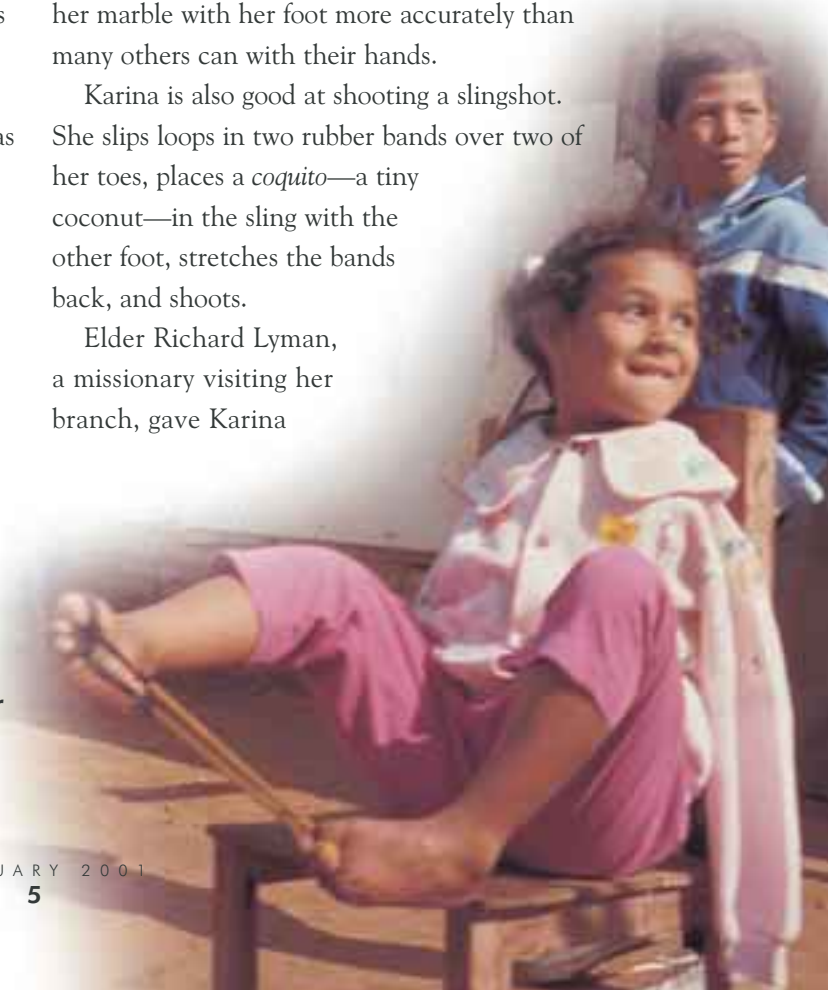
Far left: Karina loves to draw, especially pictures of flowers. Above, left: Karina cradles a chick under her chin. Above, right: Germán, Ruth, and Karina. Right: Karina demonstrates her skill with a slingshot.



game—and she even beats some of the missionaries who play with her. She controls a marble with her foot and releases it from her toes with a kick. She can propel her marble with her foot more accurately than many others can with their hands.

Karina is also good at shooting a slingshot. She slips loops in two rubber bands over two of her toes, places a *coquito*—a tiny coconut—in the sling with the other foot, stretches the bands back, and shoots.

Elder Richard Lyman, a missionary visiting her branch, gave Karina





Left: Ruth and Karina (front) with members of their family. From left: Germán, Juan, Ros (Ruth's mother), Eugenio, Isabel (Karina's mother), Mariela Isabel, and Federico (Karina's father). Below: Karina and Elder Lyman playing their harmonicas.

a harmonica. She was timid and unsure at first. But in just a few minutes, she was using her feet to hold the harmonica and make music.

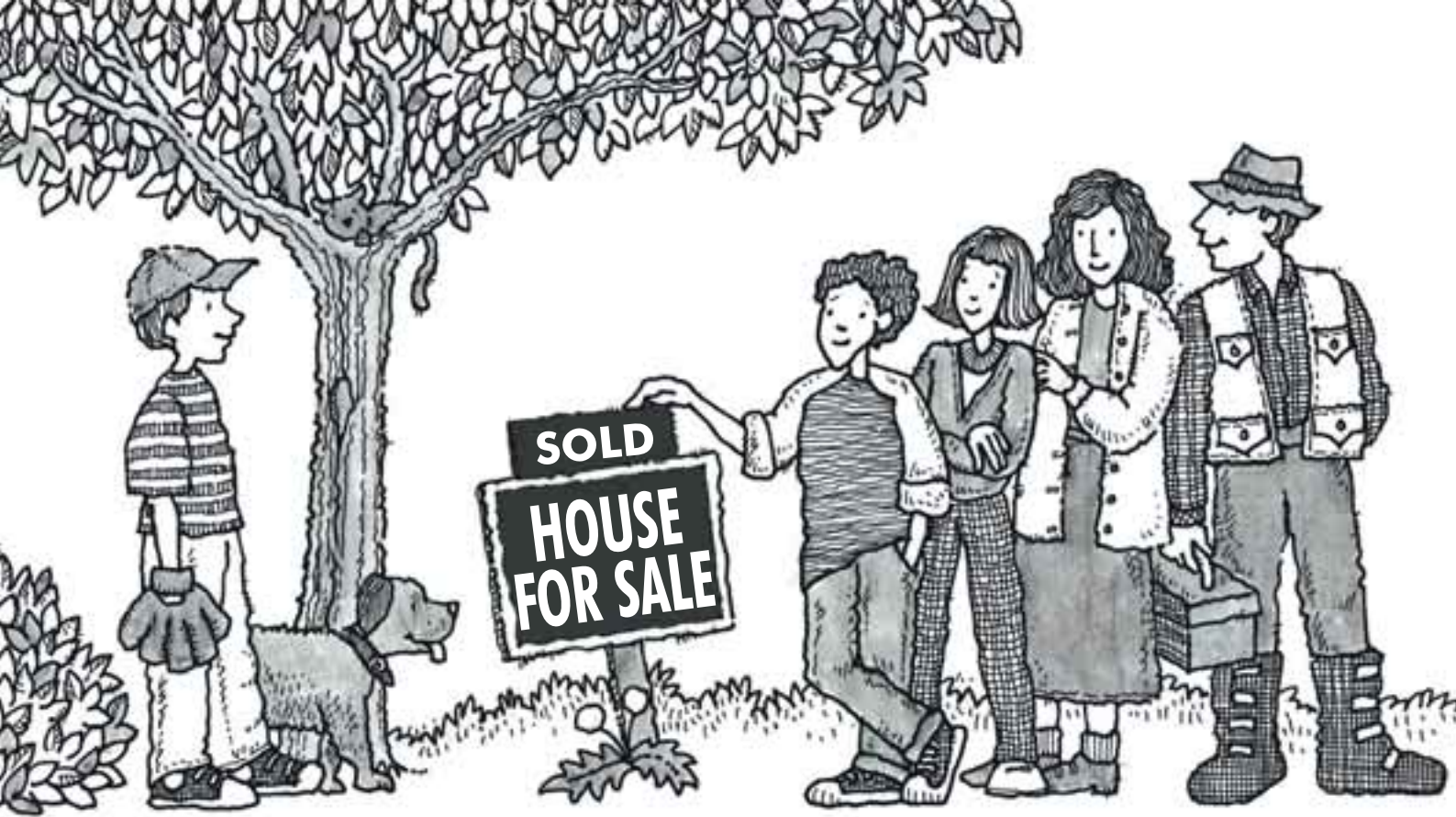
Soon Karina will be eight, and she is looking forward to her birthday. She hopes to have a big chocolate cake with white frosting. But she is even more excited that she will be baptized. Her parents and the missionaries

are teaching her about baptism and the covenants she will make, and her father is preparing to baptize her. She is eager to become a member of the Church. She loves the gospel and loves to share it.

Luz Karina lives up to her name. She truly is a light to those who know her. □

Mary Ann Whetten Lyman served a full-time mission with her husband, Richard, in the Paraguay Asunción Mission.





FICTION

Sometimes Different Is Good

By Janice Porter Hayes

The McDowell family moved into a house across the street nearly six months ago. They sure are different from the rest of the families in the neighborhood!

First I met Nephi, their 11-year-old son. Nephi told me his parents named him after an ancient American prophet. I'd never heard of any ancient American prophets, but he showed me a book with his name in it—a book called the Book of Mormon.

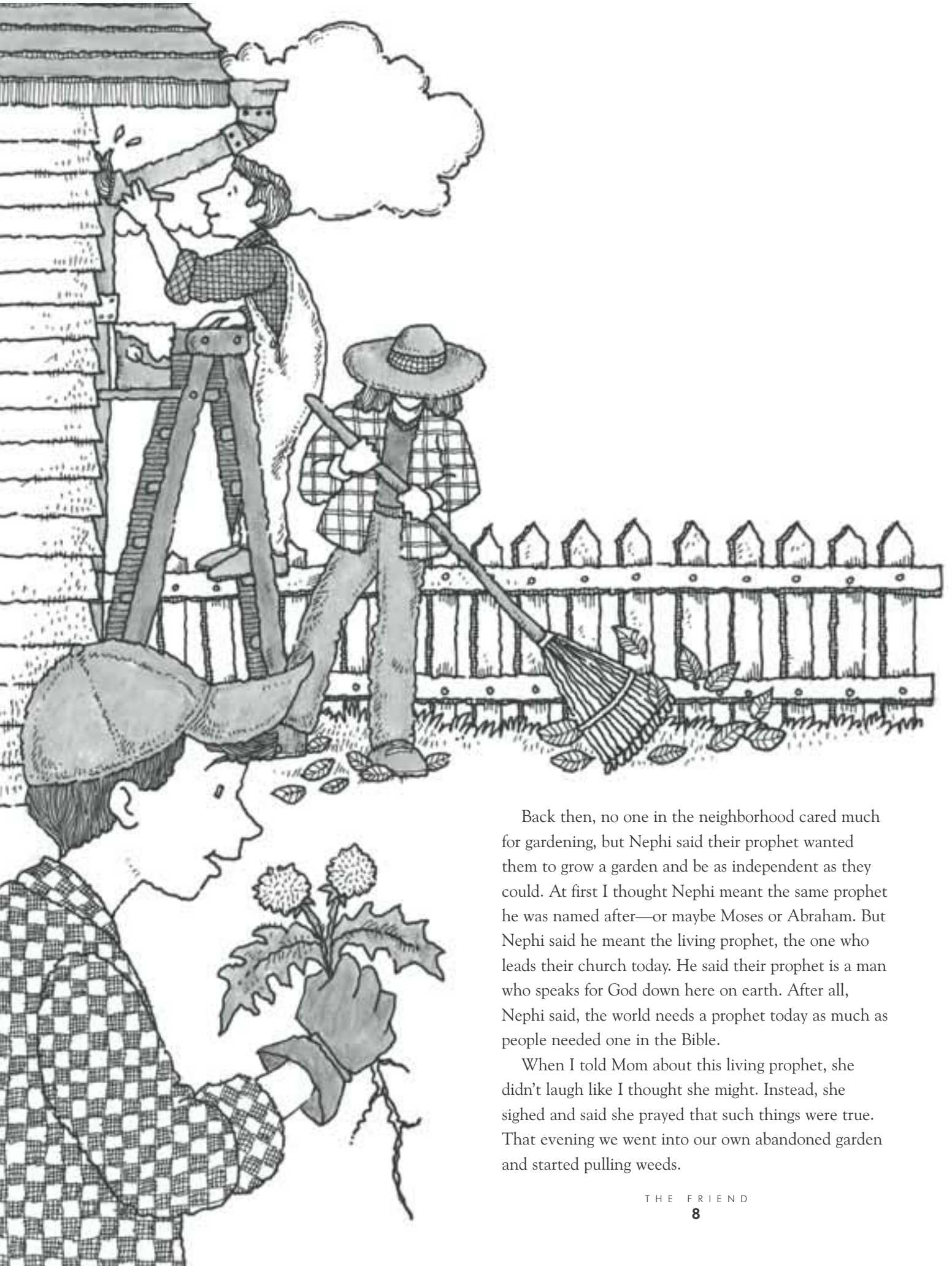
My family goes to church, and sometimes we read the Bible. But nobody in my family had ever heard of the Book of Mormon. Nephi called it a second testament of Jesus Christ and said it was an ancient record of the Lord's dealings with people in the Americas. That was my first clue that Nephi and his family were different.

Next I met Nephi's older sister, Glitchen. She wasn't

named for a prophet. She was named for her great-grandmother Glitchen Kelly, who was Irish. Glitchen's great-grandmother had red hair and married a man from Poland named Alex. Glitchen knows all this because her family studies their family history.

All I know about my family is that my parents were born here in our town. I'd like to know more, but I can't imagine spending all the time that Glitchen's mother does researching their ancestors.

When the McDowells first moved in, the whole neighborhood changed. For one thing, it looked better. The house they moved into hadn't been kept up very well, but not long after unloading their furniture, the McDowells set to work repairing their new home. They painted it and fixed the front gate. Then Mr. McDowell put Nephi to work in the garden plot, clearing weeds and tilling the soil.



Back then, no one in the neighborhood cared much for gardening, but Nephi said their prophet wanted them to grow a garden and be as independent as they could. At first I thought Nephi meant the same prophet he was named after—or maybe Moses or Abraham. But Nephi said he meant the living prophet, the one who leads their church today. He said their prophet is a man who speaks for God down here on earth. After all, Nephi said, the world needs a prophet today as much as people needed one in the Bible.

When I told Mom about this living prophet, she didn't laugh like I thought she might. Instead, she sighed and said she prayed that such things were true. That evening we went into our own abandoned garden and started pulling weeds.

So Mom, Dad, and I grew our garden, and the McDowells grew theirs. In the fall, Mom and Mrs. McDowell swapped recipes, and Mrs. McDowell taught Mom how to preserve food. Then Nephi's dad and my dad began fishing together on Saturdays and sometimes on Friday evenings—but never on Sundays. We quickly learned just what the McDowells would and would not do on Sunday.

"It's our Sabbath," Nephi told me. They didn't fish or go shopping or do anything but spend family time together and do church stuff. I felt really sorry for Nephi and Glitchen, but they didn't seem to mind, even when I heard Nephi's stomach growling one Sunday when he'd been fasting all day.



Now, believe it or not, after all I've seen of the McDowells, I like them. Maybe it's because they laugh a lot and seem to have fun. Or maybe it's because Nephi helped our soccer team win a few games. Or maybe it's because I just feel good when I'm with them.

Tonight after dinner, the McDowells are bringing over some missionaries to tell my parents and me more about their church. Mom has cleaned the house and baked a cake, and Nephi and Glitchen are bringing a Book of Mormon just for me.

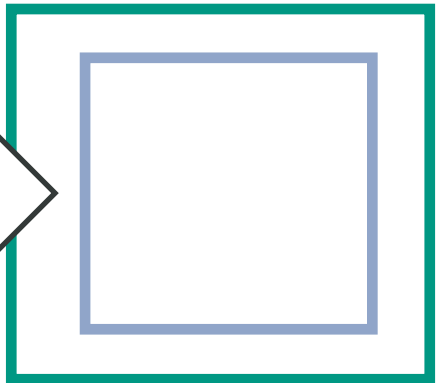
I'll soon know all about Nephi the prophet and about family history stuff and gardens and the Sabbath day, plus a whole lot more. I'll even learn what it means to be different, like the McDowells. I think sometimes different is good. □





TELLS

TELLS



THE PROPHET SPEAKS FOR HEAVENLY FATHER

By Diane S. Nichols

“For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith” (D&C 21:5).



Imagine that your mom asks you to tell your brothers and sisters to come to dinner. You are to speak for your mom, delivering a message for her to your family. Will they listen?

Father in Heaven has chosen certain men to speak for Him. These men are called prophets. They teach us what He wants us to know. Will we listen?

The scriptures tell us about prophets Father in Heaven called to speak for Him. Noah warned the people to repent or a terrible flood would cover the earth. Noah’s family listened, and they were saved from the flood (see Genesis 6–8; 2 Peter 2:5).

Lehi was shown that Jesus Christ would be the Savior of the world. Lehi’s son Nephi prayed to know if his father’s words were true. The Lord visited Nephi, and Nephi believed all his father’s words. Later, Nephi, like his father, spoke for the Lord (see 1 Nephi 1:18–19; 2:16–18).

Joseph Smith went into the woods to pray. Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ appeared and gave him instructions that opened the way for the Restoration of the gospel (see Joseph Smith—History 1:11–20).

We have a living prophet today, Gordon B. Hinckley. He is the President of the Church. He was chosen by God and called through proper priesthood authority. President Hinckley testifies that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. All the prophets testify of Jesus Christ and teach us what He wants us to do (see Jacob 7:11; D&C 21:1, 4–5).

When we pray to Heavenly Father we can know that the prophet’s words are true. When we hear the prophet, we will know that he speaks to us for the Savior. And, yes, we *will* listen.

Instructions

1. Remove page 10 from the magazine, and mount it on cardboard. Cut out the mobile pieces.
2. Draw or glue a picture of yourself in the empty square, and write your name under it.
3. Fold along the dotted lines (see illustration). Read the scripture under each prophet’s picture.
4. Punch holes where indicated, and thread a piece of string through the holes as shown in the illustration. Tie a knot on the bottom end of the string, and make a loop at the top.
5. Hang up your mobile to remind you of what the Savior tells the prophets to tell you.

Sharing Time Ideas

1. Give each teacher the name of a prophet and scripture references that tell about what he did or said. Examples: Noah (Genesis 6:11–14; 7:5, 7–10); Moses (Exodus 14:8–9, 13–14, 21–22); Malachi (Malachi 3:10); Abinadi (Mosiah 13:1–5, 9–10); Samuel the Lamanite (Helaman 14:1–8; 16:2–3); Brigham Young (D&C 136:1–4). Have each class dramatize their situation. Have the other children guess who the prophet is. Discuss what happened as a result of the prophet’s message.
2. Have each teacher tell a child something important in that class’s lesson for the day. Have each messenger tell the whole Primary what he or she learned. Explain that the messengers spoke for their teachers to the whole Primary. Ask all the children if they have ever been messengers before (for parents, friends, siblings, and so on). Explain that when we speak for someone else, that person is depending on us to give the entire message correctly. Explain that Heavenly Father sends prophets to deliver His messages. Have several priesthood holders represent various prophets. Have each share that prophet’s message. □

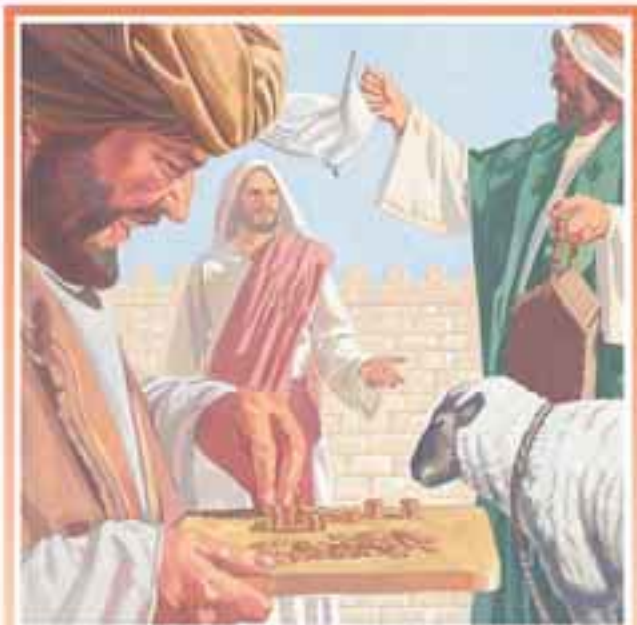
JESUS AND HIS HEAVENLY FATHER'S HOUSE



ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT T. BARRETT

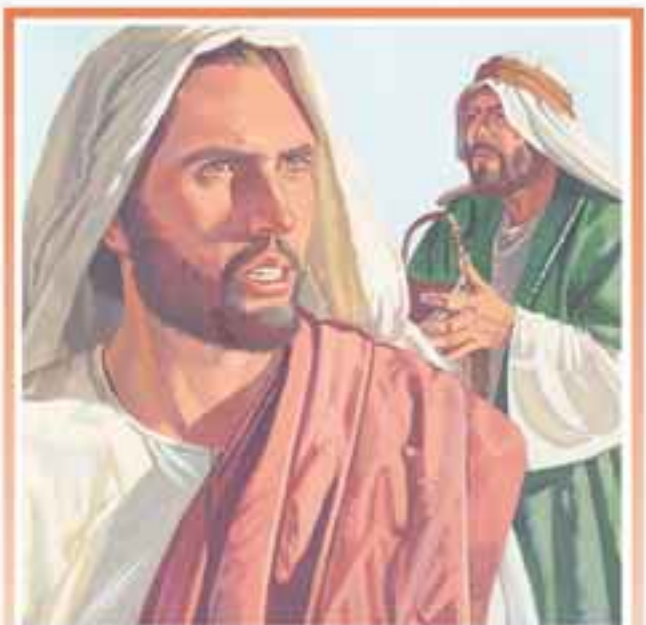
Jesus went to Jerusalem to the temple. Many people went there to make a sacrifice by killing an animal and burning it on an altar. The sacrifice helped people think about the Savior, who would sacrifice Himself by suffering and dying for them.

Leviticus 1:3-9; John 2:13; Moses 5:5-7



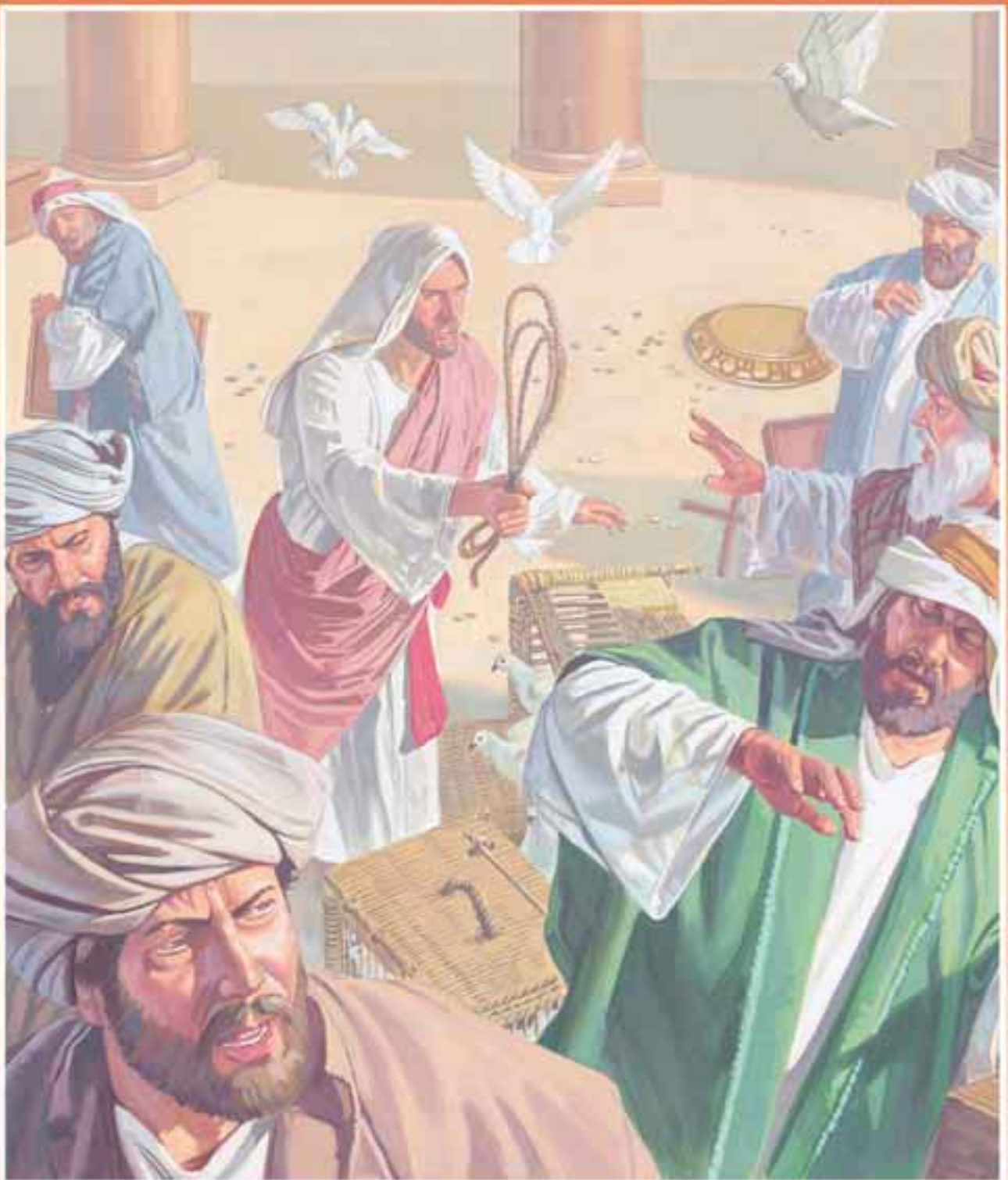
Because some people did not have an animal to sacrifice, other people sold animals to them in the temple. The sellers just wanted to get money. They did not think about God.

John 2:14



Jesus saw the people selling animals in the temple. He said the temple was His Heavenly Father's house, a holy place. He did not want people to sell things there.

John 2:16



Jesus made a whip, overturned the tables, threw the money on the floor, and made the people leave the temple. He would not let them sell animals and be irreverent in Heavenly Father's house.

John 2:15-16

NICODEMUS



Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a ruler of the Jews. Many Pharisees did not believe that Jesus Christ was sent by God. Nicodemus believed that Jesus was sent by God because of the miracles He did.

John 3:1–2



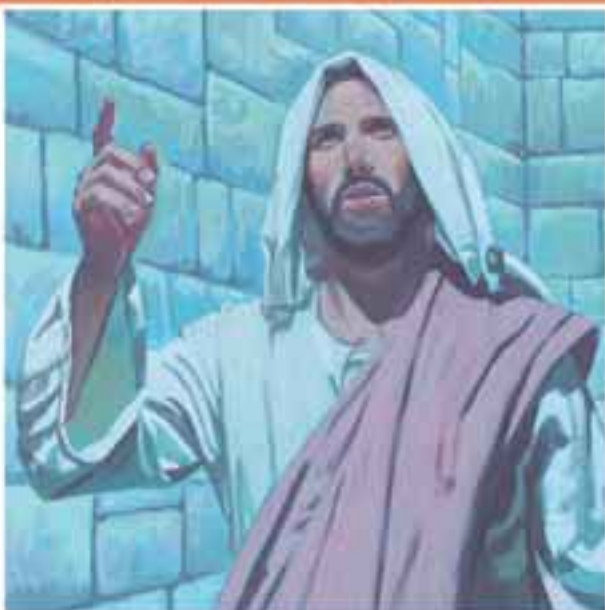
Nicodemus talked with the Savior one night. Jesus told him that no one could enter the kingdom of God unless he or she was born again.

John 3:3–5



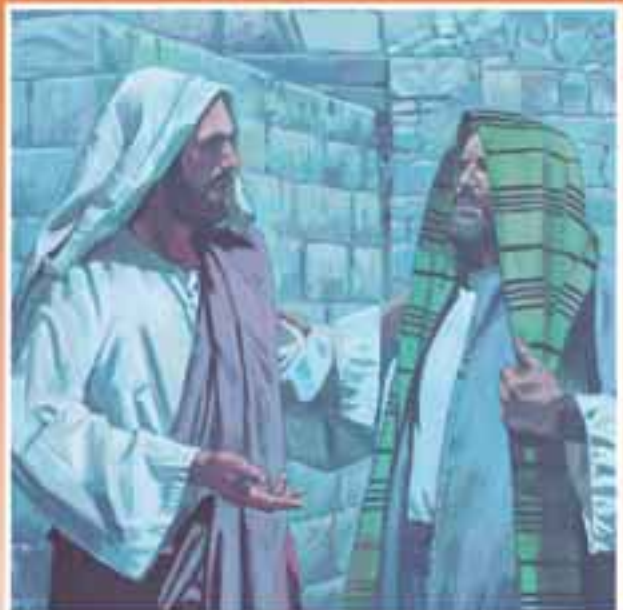
Nicodemus did not understand what Jesus meant. How could a person be born again? The Savior explained that He was talking about being born spiritually. To do this, a person must be baptized and receive the Holy Ghost.

John 3:5–7



Jesus explained that Heavenly Father had sent Him to earth to prepare a way for us all to return to Heavenly Father. The Savior testified that He would suffer and die on a cross so we would be saved if we believe in Him and keep His commandments.

John 3:12–17



He said we need to choose to do those things that are right and not to do things that are wrong. If we do what is right, we will live forever in the kingdom of God.

John 3:18–21

“Search These Commandments”

“Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled” (D&C 1:37).



“This year the entire Church membership is studying the Doctrine and Covenants. Its remarkable and inspiring message is being taught and pondered in many languages and in a hundred nations across the earth. It is a glorious book full of words of heavenly wisdom. It contains the word of God to us of this generation.”

Gordon B. Hinckley

(“*The Order and Will of God*,” *Tambuli*, August 1989, 2)



“The Book of Mormon is the ‘keystone’ of our religion, and the Doctrine and Covenants is the capstone, with continuing latter-day revelation. The Lord has placed His stamp of approval on both the keystone and the capstone.”

Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994)

(“*The Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants*,” *Ensign*, May 1987, 83)

“The Doctrine and Covenants is full of splendid things with which we ought to be familiar. But you can read this book through and through, and learn it off by heart, and it won’t do you a particle of good unless you put into practice the teachings. . . . If we as a people would live up to those wonderful revelations that have come to us, we would be a bright and shining light to all the world.”



Heber J. Grant (1856–1945)

(*Gospel Standards*, compiled by G. Homer Durham [1941], 39, 43)

“The book of Doctrine and Covenants contains some of the most glorious principles ever revealed to the world, some that have been revealed in greater fulness than they were ever revealed before to the world.”



Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918)

(*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* [1998], 44)



“The book of Doctrine and Covenants is given for the Latter-day Saints expressly for their everyday walk and actions.”

Brigham Young (1801–77)

(*Teachings of Presidents of the Church:*

Brigham Young [1997], 120)



“The book of revelations . . . show[s] that the keys of the mysteries of the kingdom of our Savior are again entrusted to man; and the riches of eternity [are] within the compass of those who are willing to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

Joseph Smith (1805–44)

(*History of the Church*, 1:235)



"By the Gift and Power of God," by Simon Dewey, courtesy of the Museum of Church History and Art, Fifth International Art Competition

"My servant Joseph Smith, Jun., . . . has translated the book, even that part which I have commanded him, and as your Lord and your God liveth it is true" (D&C 17:5-6; see also D&C 135:3).



With the assistance of Oliver Cowdery and other scribes, the Prophet Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon “by the gift and power of God” (D&C 135:3). The book proves “to the world that the holy scriptures are true, and that God does inspire men and call them to his holy work in this age and generation” (D&C 20:11). Joining the Book of Mormon as an inseparable second witness is the Doctrine and Covenants. See “Inseparable Witnesses of Jesus Christ,” page 14.